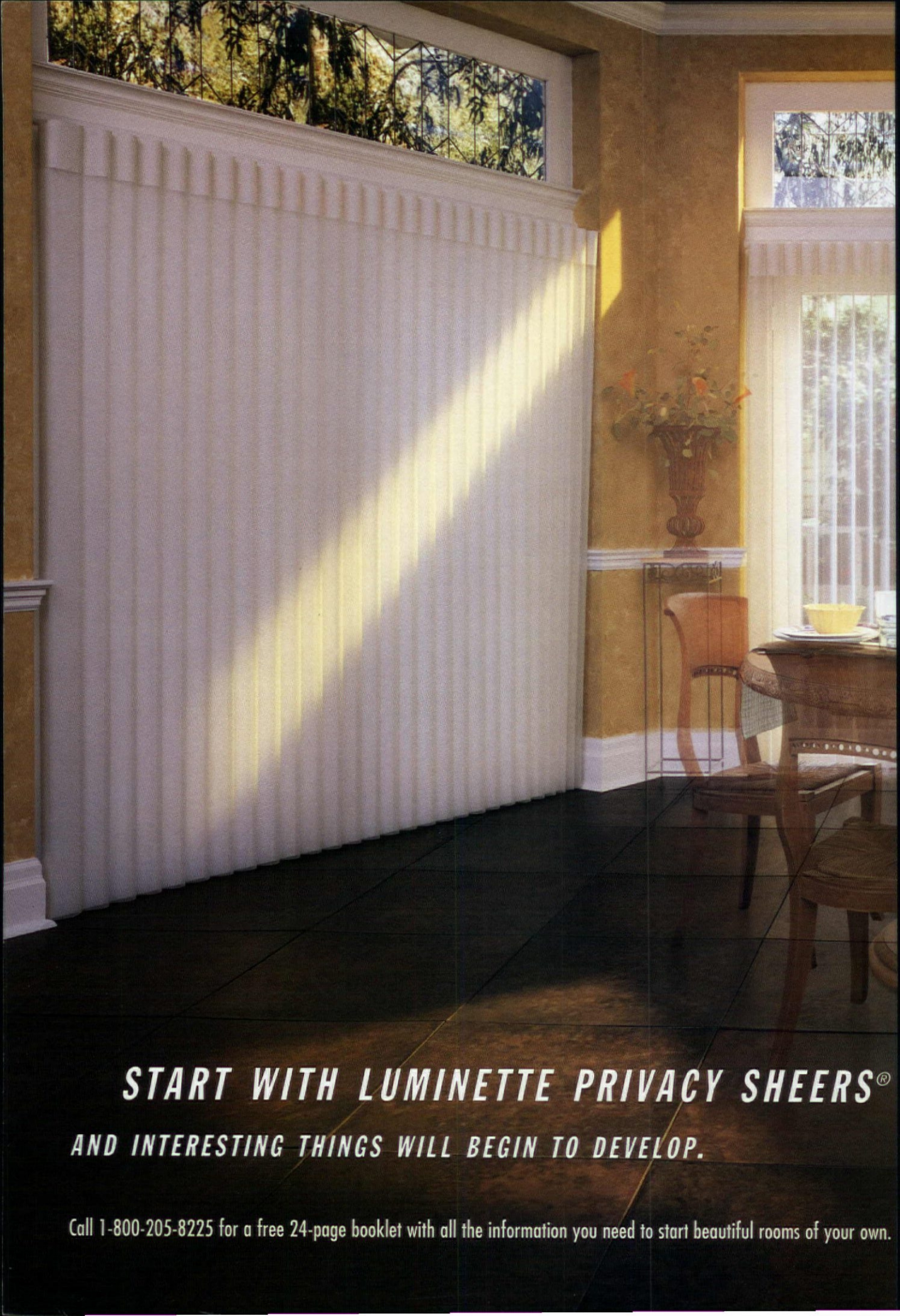
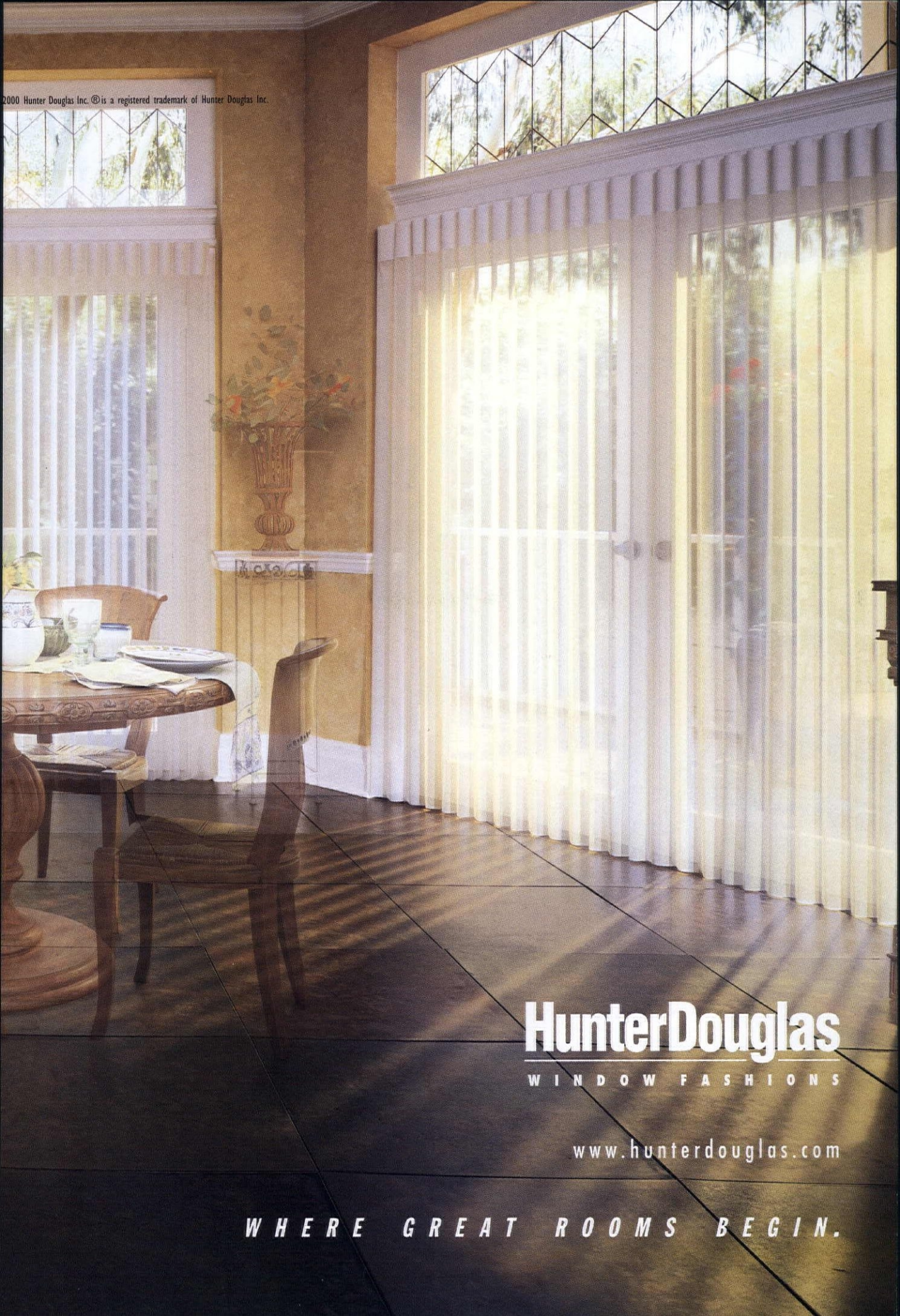

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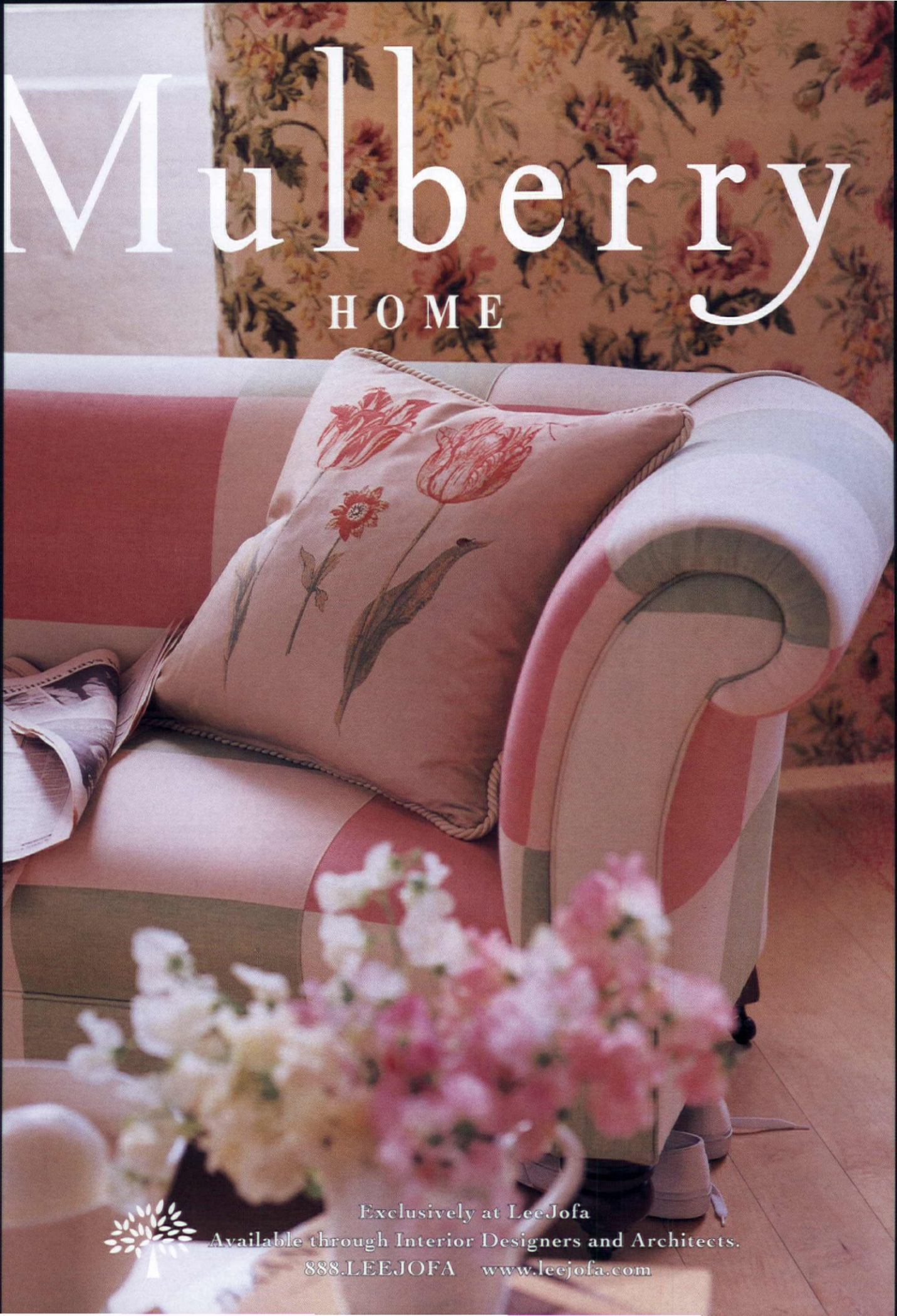
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House&Garden
MARCH 2000 VOLUME 169 NO. 3

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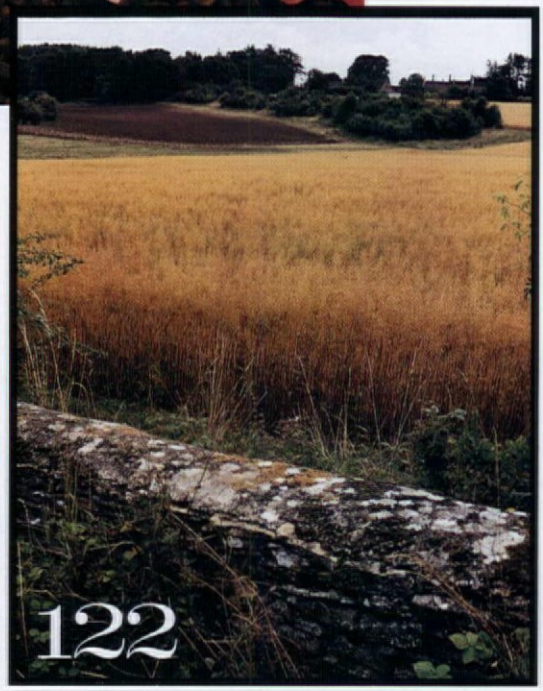
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ON THE COVER: "OUTDOOR THEATER," PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDRE BAILHACHE



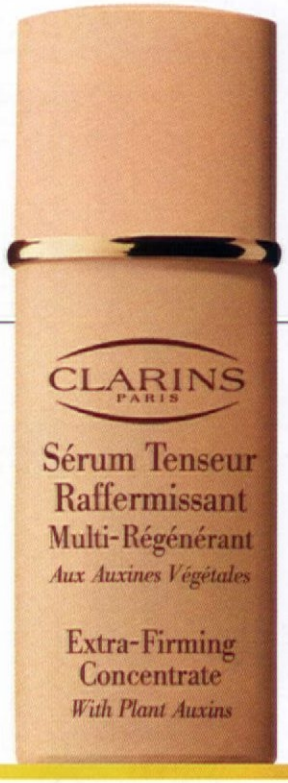
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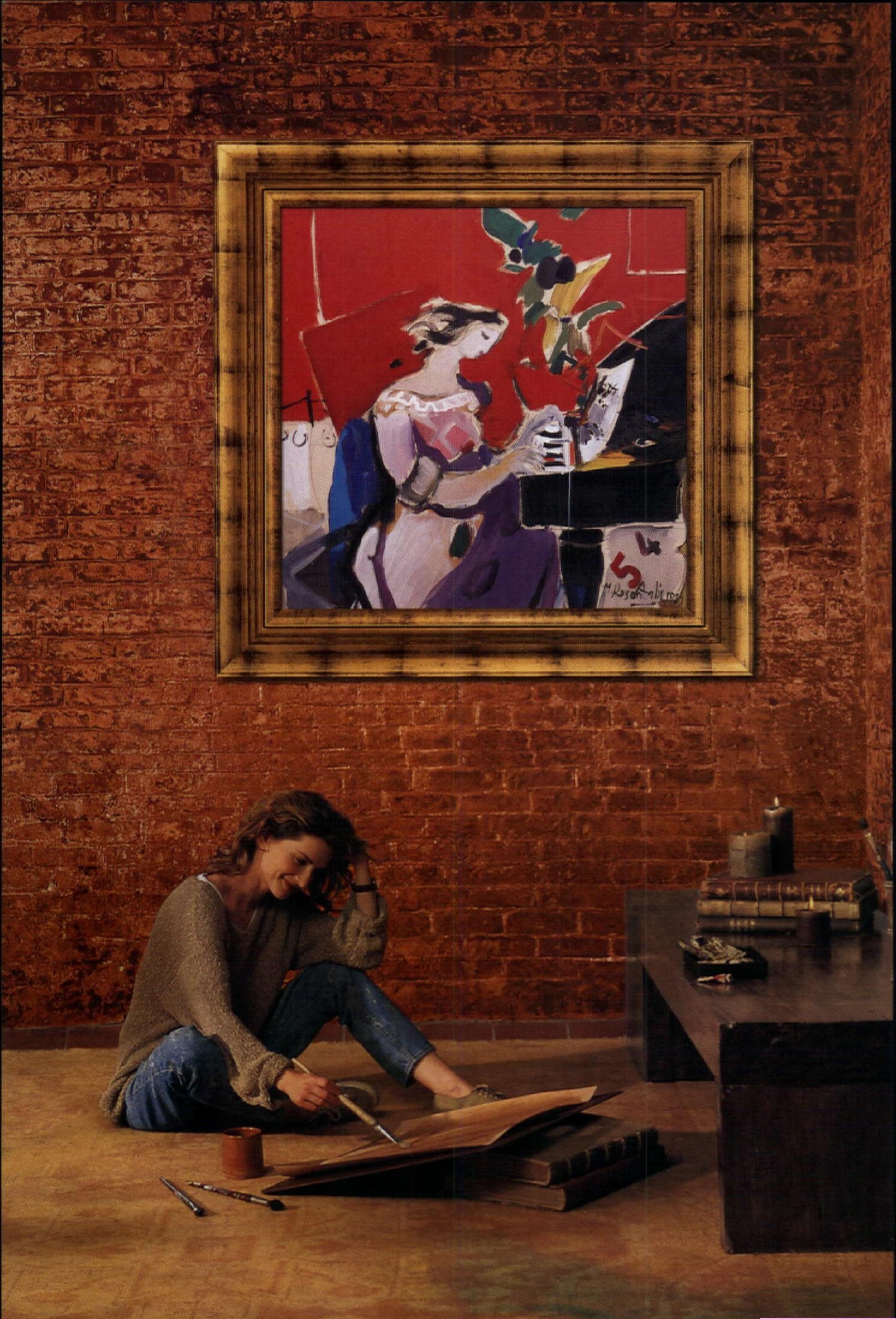
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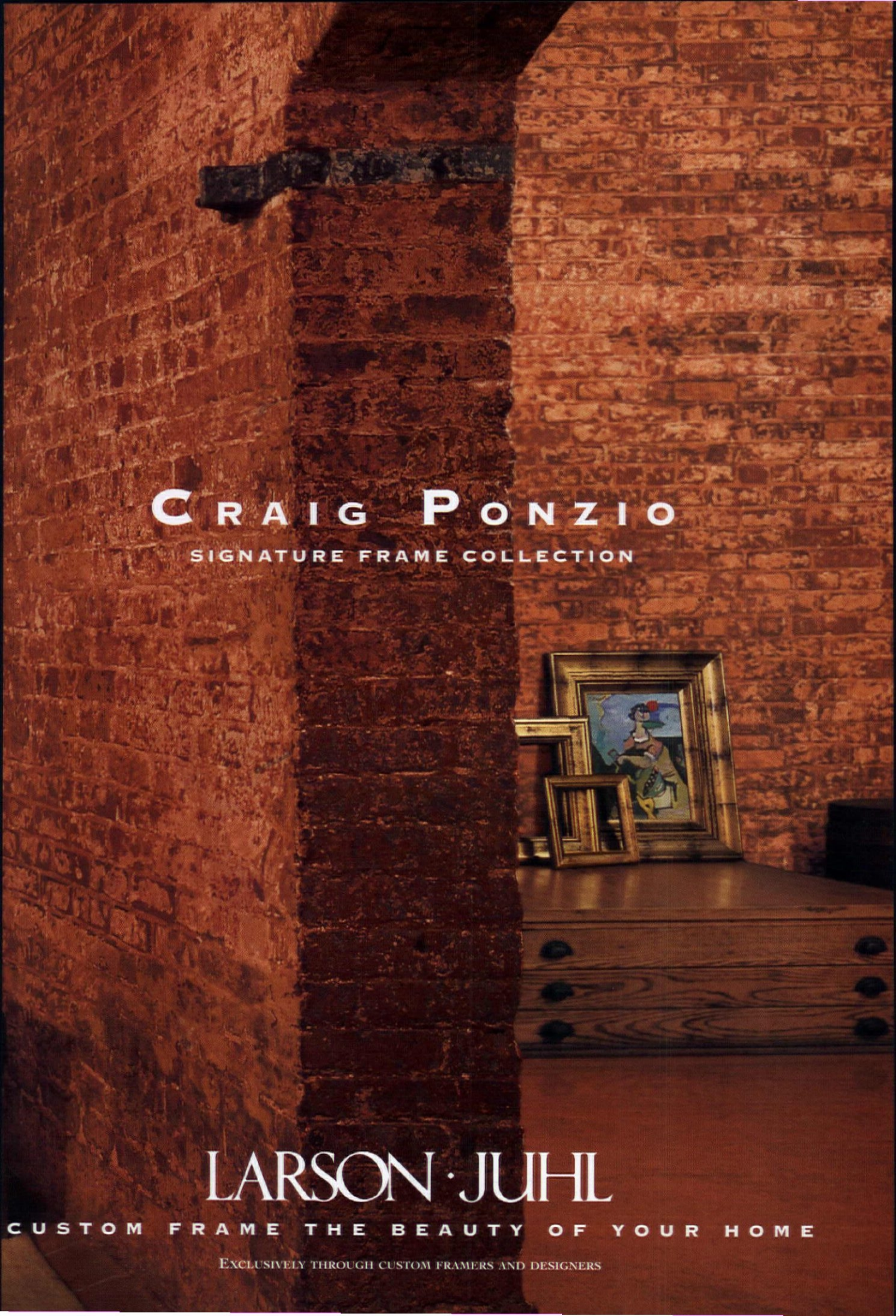
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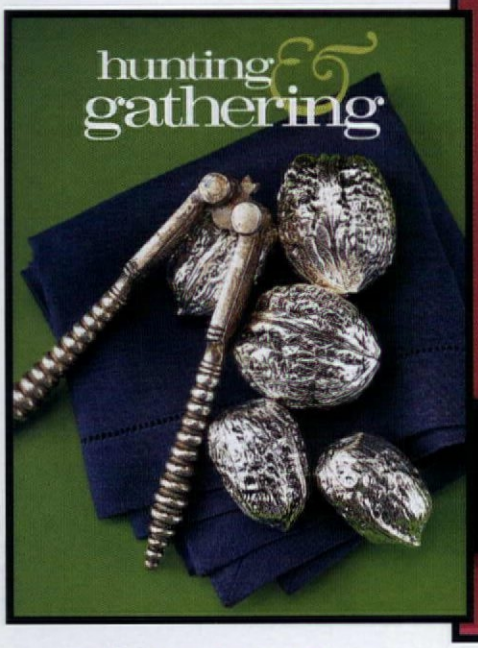
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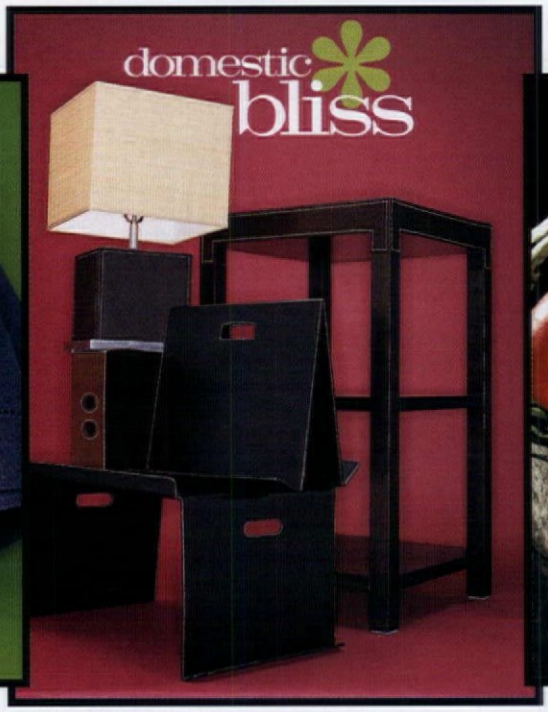
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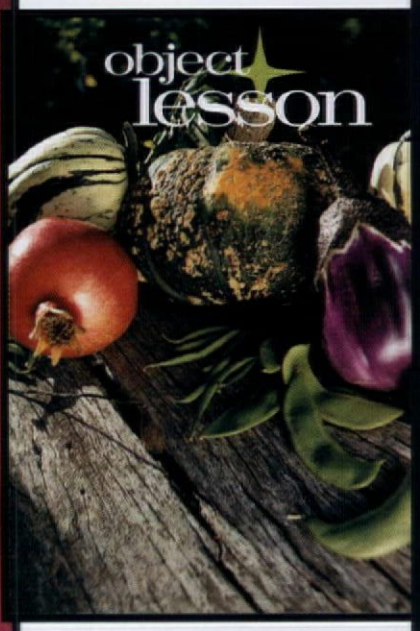



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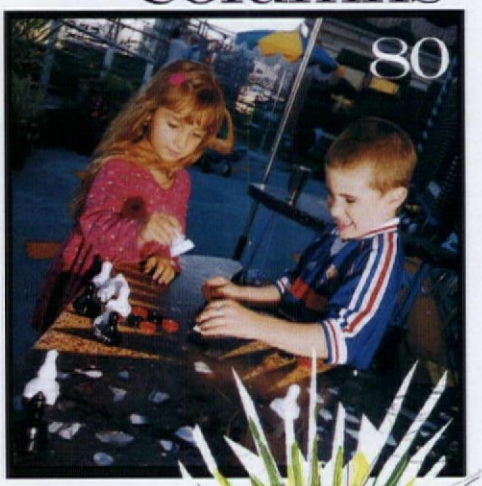
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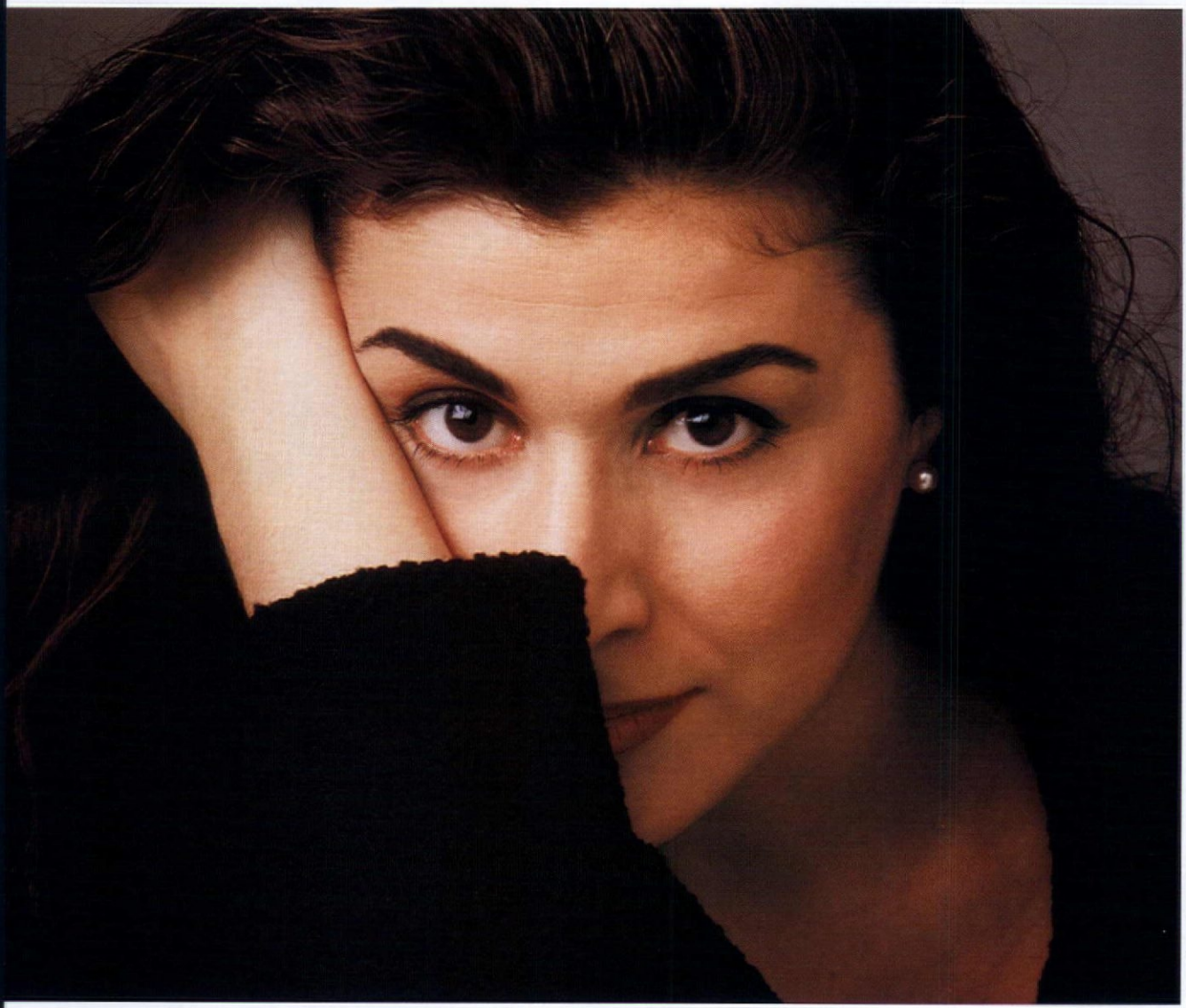
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**CECILIA BARTOLI**
**APPRECIATES THE EXHILARATING CHALLENGE**
**OF PERFORMING UNDER PRESSURE.**

**WE COULD SAY THE SAME OF HER TIMEPIECE.**



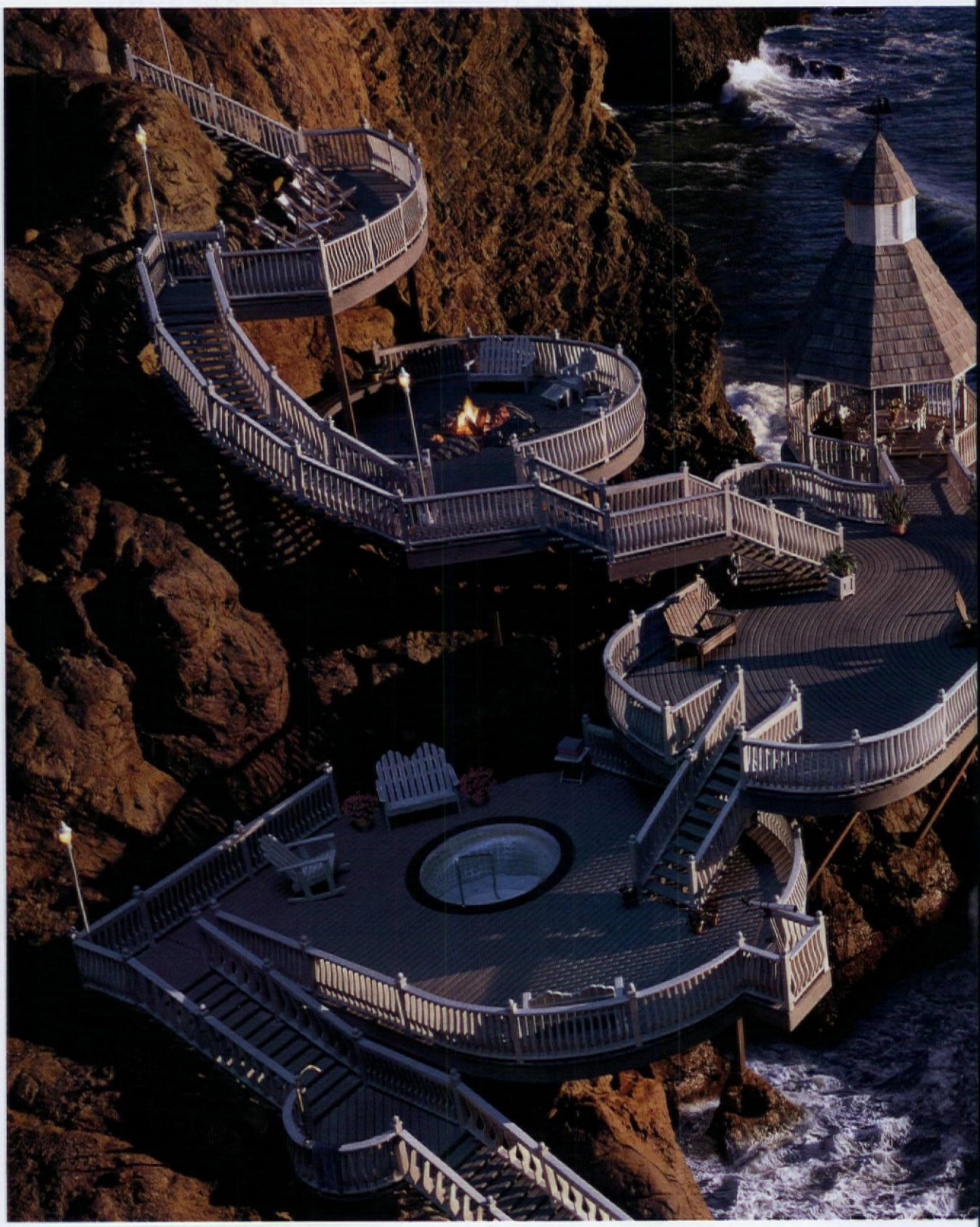
ecilia Bartoli's beautiful mezzo-soprano voice has quickly established her as one of opera's owering talents. Along the way, her Lady Datejust has been a steadfast and dazzling companion.



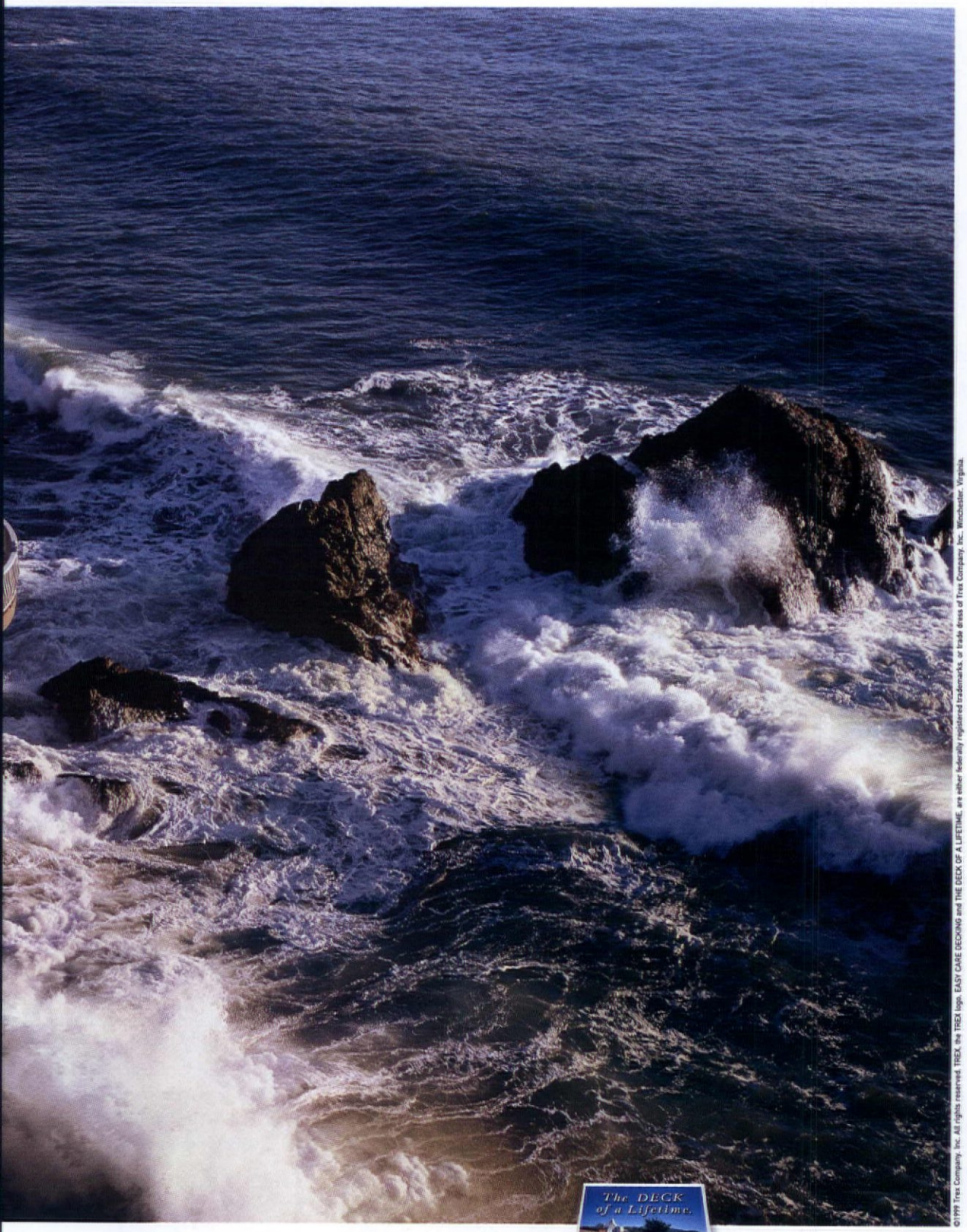

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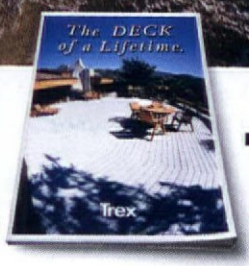
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# plant kingdom

WHEN I WAS nine or ten we moved to a house that sat nestled in huge rock outcroppings surrounded by trees. I still remember the nervous excitement of exploring the new yard, the sense of sorrow at the loss of familiar and beloved territory, and the pleasure of learning a strange landscape. That yard was full of amazements: huge willows whose climbing branches hung over a pond, fairy circles in the grass, weird mosses on the rocks. . . . One sweltering day toward the end of our first summer there, I ventured into a clearing I hadn't yet noticed much; this time, though, I was startled by a row of plants with the most enormous leaves I'd ever seen, each at the end of a long, crimson stalk. I was beside myself with the discovery. These things seemed otherworldly, the kind of plant that dinosaurs might have munched on. I told no one, with an instinct of protectiveness, and every day went to visit the creatures. They really were shocking, the way they grew so extravagantly and kept their perfectly symmetrical shape. I knew I was in the presence of magic.

So you can imagine my dismay—disgust, really—when, having decided to share this secret with my father, my gardening buddy, he stepped into the clearing, took a look around, and with a cursory glance at the miraculous plants, pronounced them . . . vegetables: "Rhubarb. This must have been someone's old kitchen garden." With that, he broke off a red stalk (I can still hear that sickening snap of a limb) and held it out for me to nibble. I refused, of course.

Vegetables? Fruits? Food? In the dirt? Quite honestly, I must have thought vegetables came from tin cans, and anyway, the closest I willingly got to one was the potato puff, which everyone knows comes from the freezer. I still haven't met the child who actually likes vegetables—I know, I know, they're out there, just not in my circles. I'm sure that when George Bush took his courageous stand against broccoli, a hearty cheer went out among the little ones (up to about age 30) at dinner tables around the country.

But there is nothing like *growing* vegetables, and I don't know a child who isn't turned on by it, as long as they don't have to eat the garden. What is more gratifying than the speed with which a pumpkin vine creeps out, strangling everything it touches? Or the dramatic way tomatoes throw their ripe weight around? Sunflowers belong with vegetable gardens, and they're almost psychedelic, practically letting you see them grow. Vegetable gardens are charismatic in a way that flowering borders aren't; they draw people in. They're inherently sociable and nurturing, meant to feed friends and family. And there's something wildly charming about a gardener who would say, well, I love strawberries in the morning, so into the garden go the strawberry plants. Of course, everyone always plants way too much, so you get visits from friends bearing tomatoes, carrots, beets, or those pesky cucumbers. And just as I have to resist my urge to trespass onto construction sites, so I have to fight the Peter Rabbit syndrome. Someone else's tomatoes, hanging fatly on the vine, are an incredible temptation, one I can justify in the spirit of saving food from the birds—if I ever were to indulge in such thievery. The thought crosses my mind constantly.

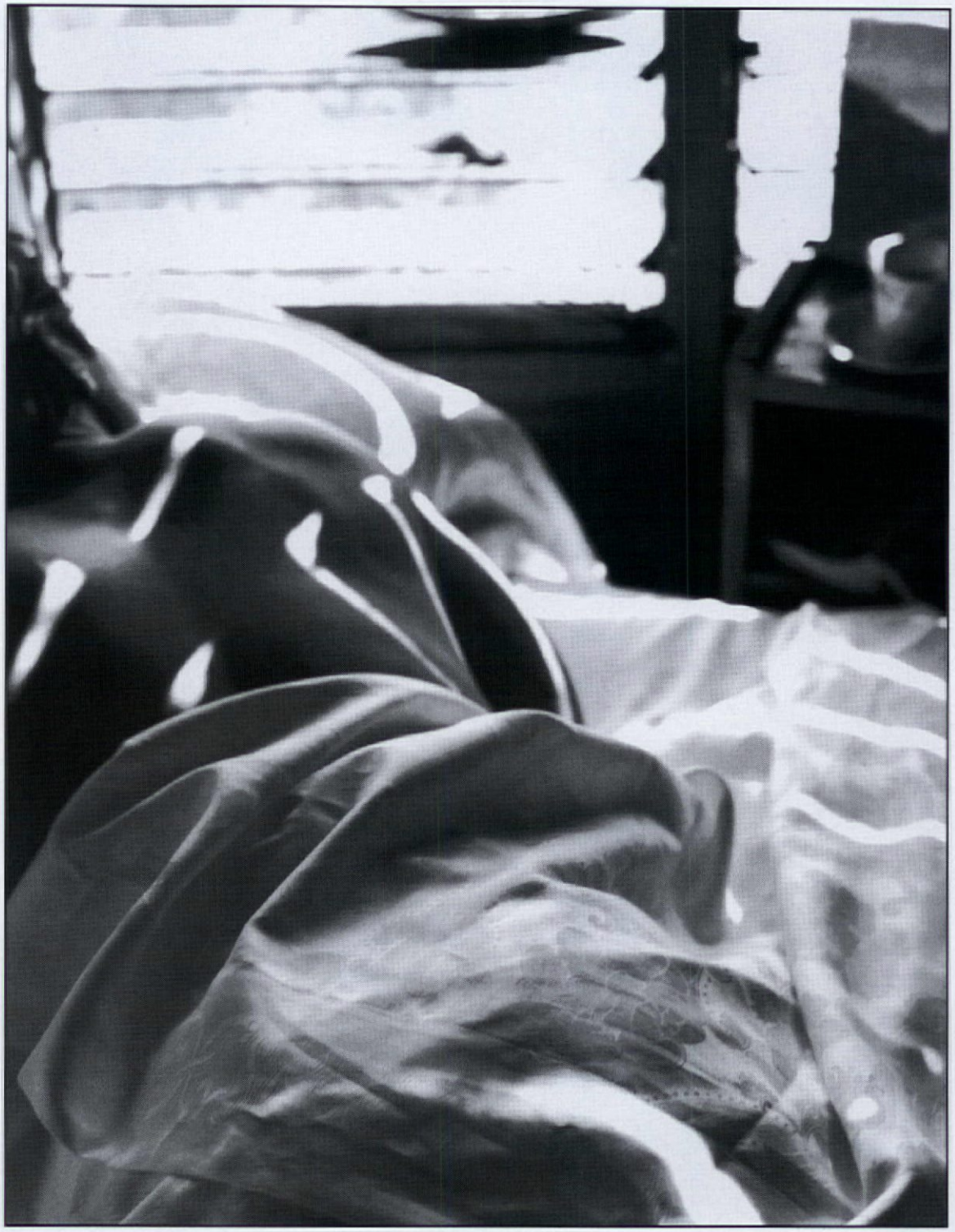
Luckily for my neighbors who grow their own, I spend a lot of the summer in a place where farmers—and mere gardeners—set out tables along the road and heap them with their harvests. For a few dollars crammed through the slot cut in the top of a coffee can, I load up my bicycle baskets with a cornucopia of foods strange and familiar. Thank God for Cole Walker, and the Duffield farm, and for Farm Fresh Excellent Eggs from Sarah's place.

And, the children would add, thank God for a great pizza parlor.



Dominique Browning, EDITOR

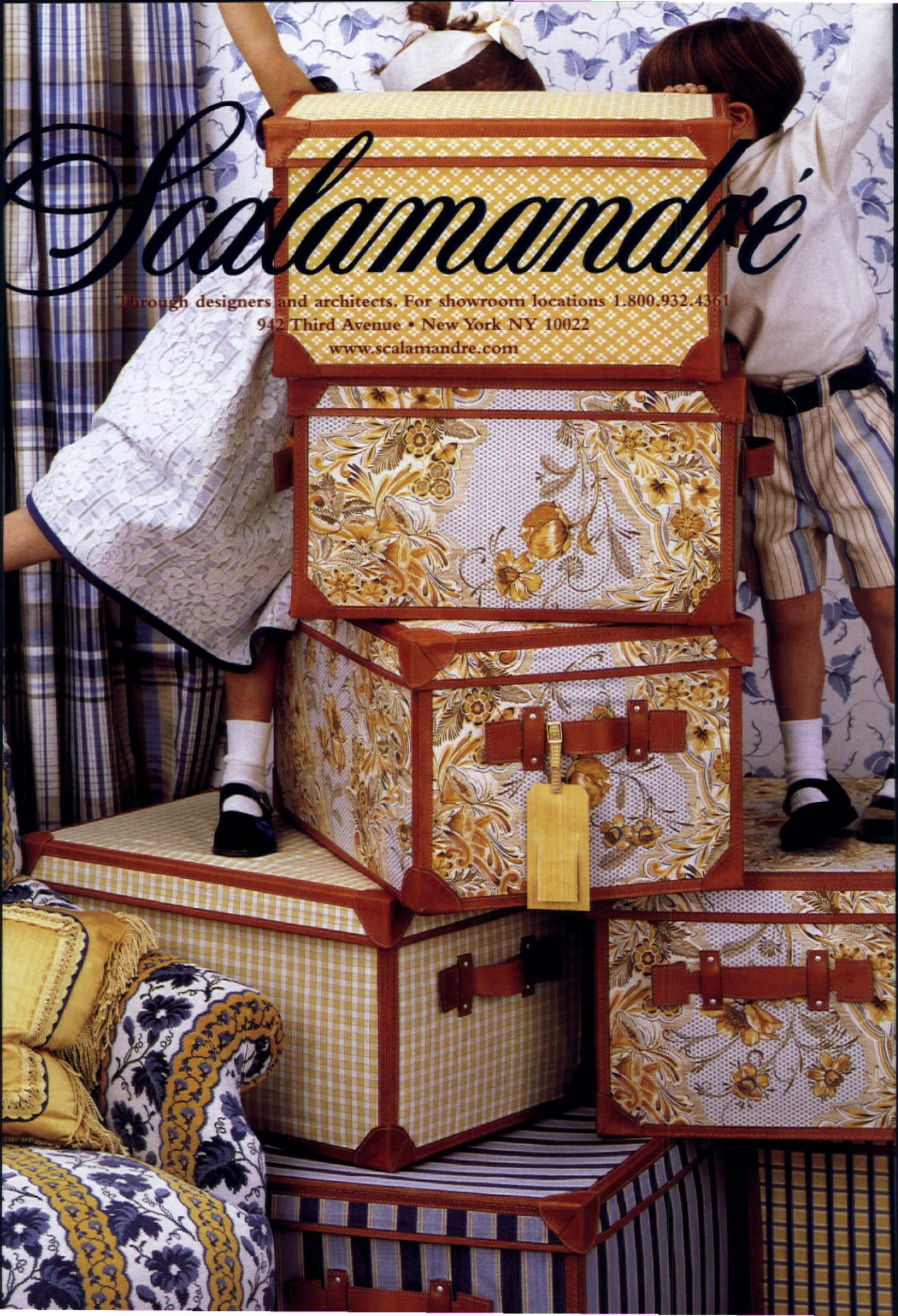

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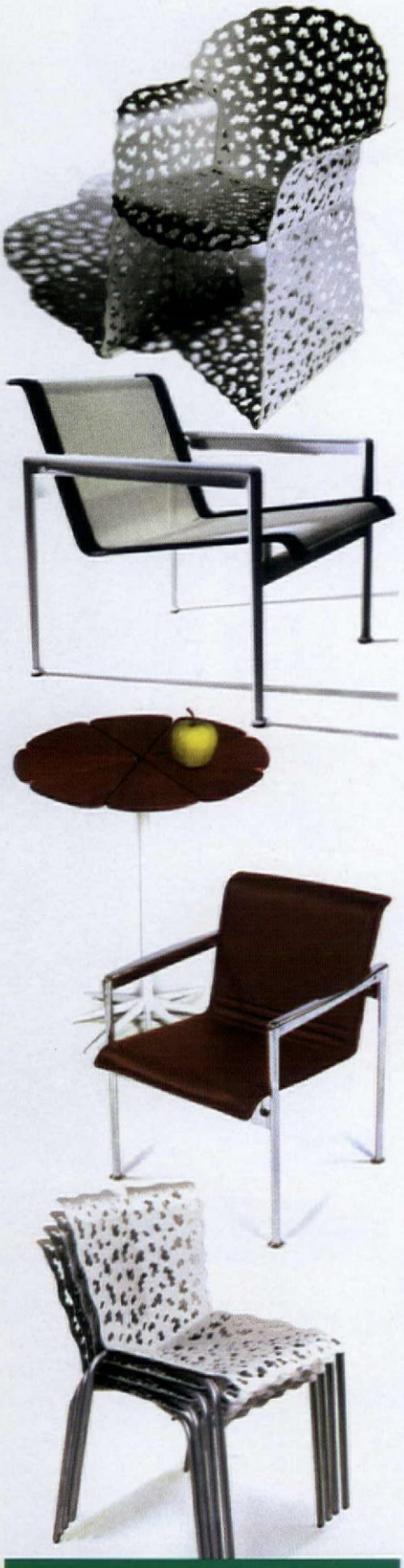


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# french kisses

## OOH-LA-LA!

CONGRATULATIONS ON "Cordial Cool" [October, 1999]. I was so happy to see Didier Gomez's apartment in your magazine. I love his work. His style is so classic and modern. I believe it's the way to go for 2000.

OSKAR L. TORRES
*Associate, Sheila Bridges Design*
*New York, NY*



PRICKLY HEAT The thorny delights of Tim Curry's garden

MY HUSBAND AND I wanted to thank you for the wonderful article [on our house and store] in the October issue ["Living Memories"]. We loved it, and judging by the number of people coming by with the "Paris Shopping Guide," it seems like the whole of the United States has read it.

FLORE DE LA MOUSSAYE
*Paris, France*

## EXOTIC CURRY

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, thank you for the beautiful article on Tim Curry's garden ["The Garden of Rocky Delights," December]. At last someone has created something truly different that is also beautiful. What a novel idea! Kudos to Curry for his labor of love restoring that garden.

WILLOW O'NEEL
*Webster, NY*

## HUNG UP ON CLOSETS

SHAME ON YOU! Three hundred and eight dollars for coat hangers, $326 for sweater storage boxes, $336 for muslin garment bags ["Closetmania," November]? Get real.

HELEN FRATENA
*Garland, TX*

## CHECKING IN

ONE WOULD EXPECT interior designers to exult over the Plaza, the Ritz, the Four Seasons, and the Peninsula, but my heart skipped upon learning that Orlando Diaz-Azcuy is another person who has discovered Château d'Esclimont ["Hotel Heaven," December]. It is just outside of Paris, all right (one hour by car), but you have to know French and possess an advanced degree in navigational orientation to find the place. But when you do, an extraordinary experience is yours. It not only has comforts and vistas—it also connects you to centuries past.

ESTER WIKER FLETCHER
*Fresno, CA*

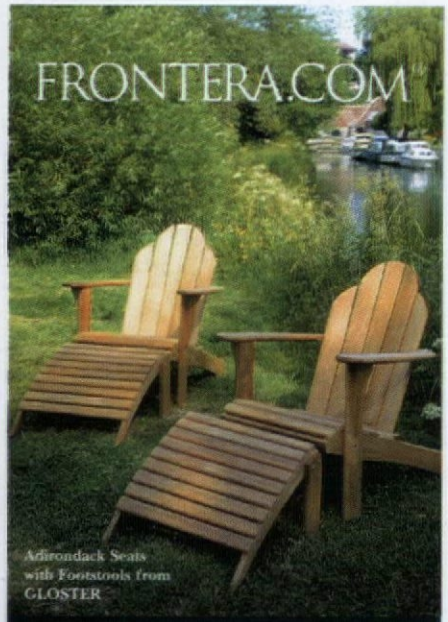
## TUNING OUT

THE TROUBLE WITH the new crop of TV decorating shows is that the hosts are actors and not designers or decorators ["TV Decorating," October]. The closest that Christine Pullara of *Treasure Makers* has ever been to "shabby chic" is a community theater production of *Kismet*.

KENNETH BLAIR
*Pleasanton, CA*

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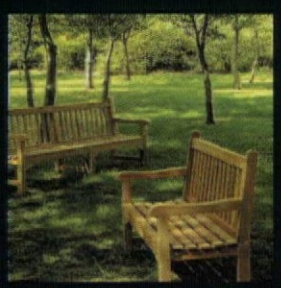

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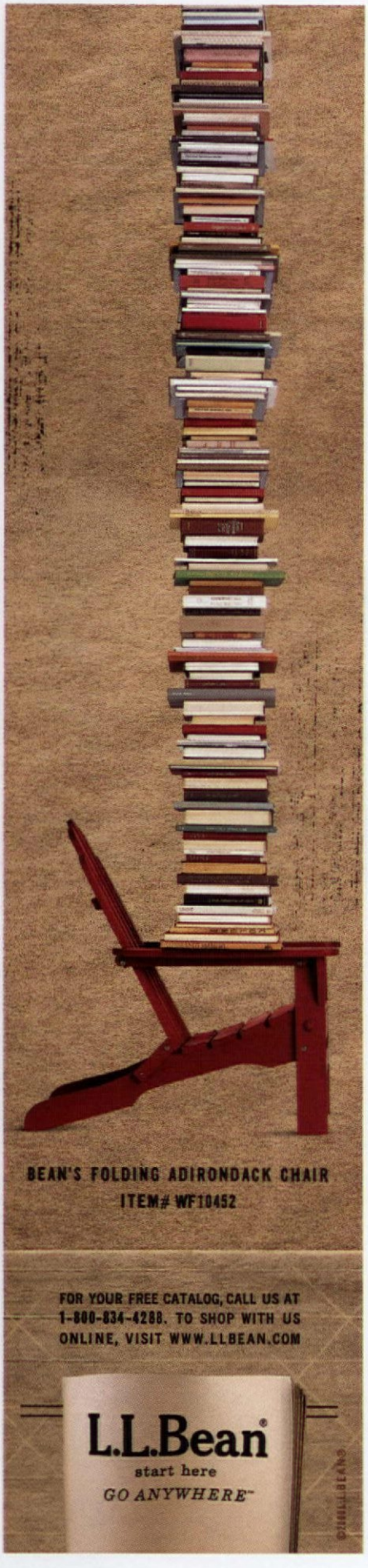


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Condé Nast House & Garden is published by the Condé Nast Publications Inc.,
Condé Nast Building, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036

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**1891**
Gauguin visits Tahiti



**1954**
GIs on leave
in Maui



**1964**
A three-hour tour



**1999**
Style Bamboo lamp
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# domestic bliss

American Leather makes furniture in 76 colors. Here are nine of them.

# hide times

WELCOME TO THE BULL MARKET IN LEATHER. Designers and manufacturers are enamored of this age-old material, using it for everything from desks and armoires to vases and floors. In our increasingly high-tech world, it has become the ultimate high-touch material. "Leather doesn't have to mean some nasty 1980s black sofa anymore," says Rick Garofalo, president and founder of Repertoire, a cutting-edge Boston furniture store that carries leather-clad tables in all shapes and sizes by Romeo Sozzi of

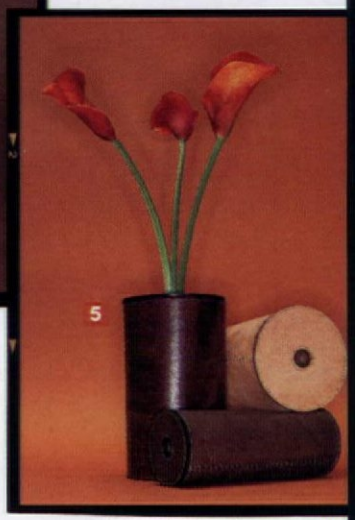
buzz
page 42



EDITED BY DAN SHAW




**1. Candles, $32 each, from Coach. 2. York Street Studio leather lamp, $460, York Street Studio. 3. Talking Table, $784, by Kerr Keller Design for Beatrix Nienkamper Furnishings Inc., available through Dossier, NYC. 4. La Sarazine lamp, $2,395, from Hermès. 5. Tivoli Leather Canisters, $80 to $105, from Room.**




Italy. "Leather is fashionable, practical, and can be manipulated in many ways." Indeed, a leather living room can be a many-splendored thing. American Leather, Inc., a red-hot Dallas manufacturer, has seen its sales soar nearly 50 percent in the past year, because it offers frames ranging from the traditional to the avant-garde, in 76 standard colors of leather. (Brown is the best seller; a deep red is No. 6, and a yellow is No. 10.) The company's success stems also from its promise to custom-build a chair or sofa in just two weeks. "People are pleased that they can get what they want when they want it," says American Leather vice president Cary Benson.

Leather's versatility contributes to its ubiquity. "I'm mixing it in a room with mohair and a silk-plaid taffeta," says Boston designer Cheryl Katz, who is decorating a house for a young software tycoon. "Like many men, he's more comfortable with leather than with fabrics. We found him a wonderful leather headboard and a baseball-stitched desk. I was so relieved he didn't want a Chesterfield or some slick, envelope-arm Italian thing."

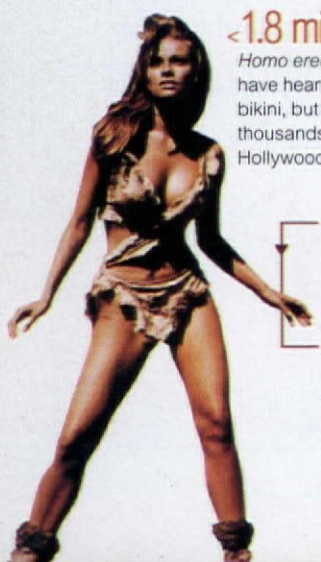
YOU CAN TRACE THE CURRENT lust for leather back to the 1920s and the renowned Parisian designer Jean-Michel Frank (who got the leather for his furniture from Hermès, which now makes its own exquisite leather furniture). "He is a god to all of us," says Teddy Edelman, whose to-the-trade firm, Edelman Leather, is a leading supplier of sumptuous calfskins and cowhides to architects and interior designers. "All the Bauhaus furniture was done in leather. Mies and Corbusier worked in leather."

Many of today's hottest interior designers are referencing Frank, whose luxe minimalism depended on simple, high-quality materials. "As a material, leather speaks for itself," says Linda Zelenko, a partner in a Connecticut company, York Street Studio, which makes leather lamps, floor tiles, towel rings, and drawer pulls. "Leather offers texture for rooms," says Garofalo. "And for modern rooms with a limited palette, a variety of textures is essential."

Leather can transform desks and coffee tables into magical objects. "They have a textural component that solid wood pieces are lacking," says Eric Brand, who designed the new Home Collection for Mulholland Brothers, a San Francisco leather goods company that began by producing fly-fishing cases in the 1980s and

## forever **leather**

**The history of leather parallels the history of humankind—from technological developments to the establishment of trade routes—and the exchange of ideas among cultures.** — LESLIE BRENNER



**<1.8 million B.C.** *Homo erectans* may have heard of the leather bikini, but it would be thousands of years before Hollywood films it.

**500,000 B.C.** Early hominids don crudely sewn animal hides.

**40,000 B.C.** Cro-Magnon architects offer homeowners a variety of animal-hide huts.

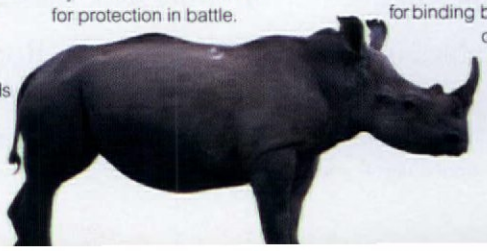
**6,000 B.C.** Neolithic peoples develop methods for converting animal hides and skins into leather.

**2,000 B.C.** Tepees dot the Great Plains.



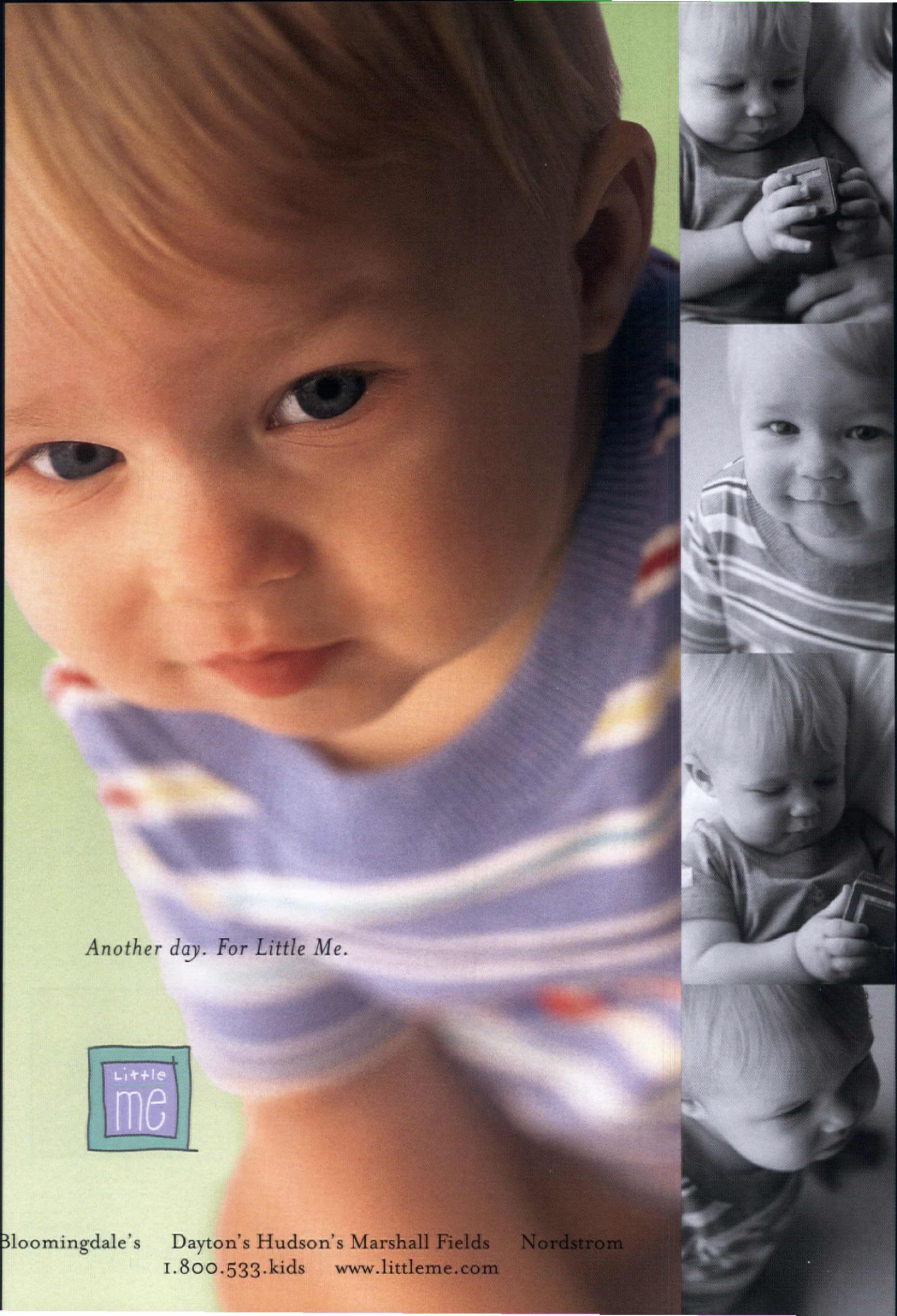
**1,600–1,200 B.C.** The oxford is born when soft wraparound leather shoes with rawhide laces become the rage among Mesopotamians.

**11 B.C.** Imitating nature, Chinese warriors wear five to seven layers of rhinoceros skins for protection in battle.



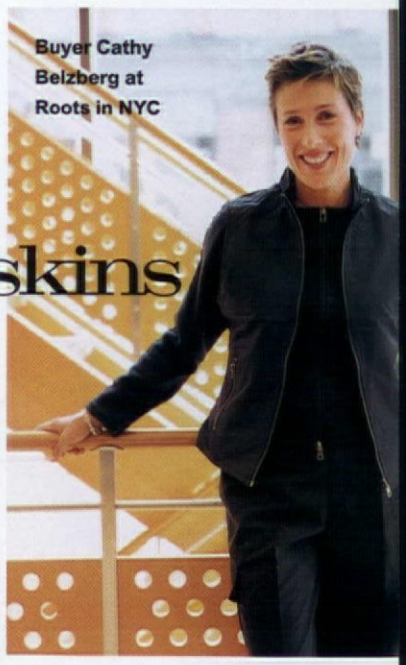


**5 B.C.** Coptic monks of northeast Africa were renowned for binding books with decorated leather.


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**1. Royal Palm leather throw blanket, $5,375, the Ralph Lauren Home Collection, NYC. 2. Florence Leather Tumbler, $185, by Heartwood, from Room. 3. Knitted leather pillows, $360 each, by Alma Home, from Room. 4. Magazine box, $295, from Banana Republic.**



Buyer Cathy Belzberg at Roots in NYC

# great skins

If you've got a PG-13 leather fetish, then you're probably familiar with Roots, the Canadian retailer known for its hip but sensible leather shoes, jackets, and bags. Now comes Roots Home, a collection of furniture and accessories that—in keeping with the company's broad style mandate—will suit your taste whether you're a midcentury modernist or a hockey player in Sault Sainte Marie. On a recent trip to the Roots store in New York's SoHo, we found 1950s-inspired leather chairs and 340-count cotton sateen bed linens. There were also kid-friendly furnishings, such as leather beanbags and blankets designed to look like hockey socks—the latter a "big bar mitzvah gift" north of the border, says Cathy Belzberg, a Torontonian who helped develop the line. The standouts are the furniture, including a Miesian chaise longue and colorful cubes and ottomans. These were designed by architect Diane Bald, who is married to Roots cofounder Michael Budman and used to work with Andrée Putman, the renowned Paris-based designer. For the price point, these pieces are well made: each one is created by hand in Toronto. Available from the company's New York and Canadian stores, the collection is just the thing for when you're ready to lay down some roots.

—INGRID ABRAMOVITCH



Metropolitan chaise, $1,650

now makes hundreds of leather products.

"You can wake up in a Mulholland bed, pull a Kleenex from a Mulholland tissue holder, and look at your loved one's photograph in a Mulholland frame, then pick up your Mulholland briefcase and head to work," says co-founder Jay Holland. Mulholland prides itself on delivering style with soul. "As society gets more fast-paced and synthetic, people want a finger in the past," Holland says. "Leather is the oldest material for clothes and tools. It has a wonderful history."

REED KRAKOFF, president/executive creative director of Coach, which started making furniture with Baker last year and recently introduced a home accessories collection, says that leather is an antidote to our computerized world. "People want things that are tactile," he says. "Leather is the ultimate natural material." And the hand-stitched detailing that shows up on many new leather pieces is a nod to old-fashioned craftsmanship. Garofalo notes, "It brings the hand of the artist back to the designer object."

Finally, from Banana Republic to B+B Italia, leather is an easy sell. "Good leather lasts a lifetime," says Edelman. Adds Garofalo: "It gets better with age—you can't say that about most fabrics."—D.S.

**middle ages** > Bavarians wear lederhosen. Leather guilds are started.



**1305** Edward I invents shoe sizes when he decrees that one inch shall equal three dried barleycorns. A child's foot that measures 12 barleycorns becomes size 12.



**1538** < Titian depicts a gilt-leather hanging in his painting *Venus of Urbino*.

**1626** Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden introduces a lightweight, highly mobile—but highly dangerous—leather gun.

**mid-1800s** Power-driven machines can now split, flesh, and dehair animal hides. New chemical dyes produce brighter colors. Artificial leathers appear.

**1908** Henry Ford's open-air Model-T comes with leather upholstery. v



**1929** The king and queen of Spain sit on Mies van der Rohe chairs at the Barcelona World's Fair. The chair becomes known as—you guessed it—the Barcelona. v



**1941** Peter Schlumbohm > cooks up the hourglass-shaped, leather-thonged Chemex coffeemaker.



**1954** In *The Wild Ones*, Marlon Brando gives leather a whole new image and becomes a generational icon. Soon, many schools ban Brando's biker jacket, because it symbolizes teen rebellion. ^

**1980s** Robert Mapplethorpe's m in-leather photos send shockwaves.





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# hot tomatoes

Everything you ever wanted to know about tomatoes (but were afraid to ask) can be found on the Internet. Could any other vegetable (okay, we know it's a fruit) inspire so many obsessive people to build Web sites?

| WEB SITE | YIELD | TIPS | LINKS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **POWER TOMATOES** United States Department of Agriculture www.ars.usda.gov/is/tom | Free copies of *Sustainable Production of Fresh-Market Tomatoes* and *Other Summer Vegetables with Organic Mulches* | Information on how to use **Hairy Vetch** (*Vicia villosa*), a spindly legume, which is the "Mercedes of cover crops" for most parts of the United States | USDA **Vegetable Laboratory** Beltsville Agricultural Research Center www.barc.usda.gov/psi/vl/home.htm |
| **MR. TOMATO, THE GARDENING INNOVATORS** www.mrtomato.com | Canadian gardening family that promotes Kozy-Coats, water-filled plastic tubes that you wrap around tomato plants to keep them warm when there is still a danger of frost | Crush eggshells and mix them into your soil, because tomatoes need calcium. Or, you can add powdered milk to your watering can. | *Juicy Bits*, the company's on-line newsletter, reports on everything from seaweed spraying to slug management. www.mrtomato.com/juicybits.html |
| **INTERNET SHRINE TO THE TOMATO** produced by Randy Irmis, Northbrook, IL http://members.aol.com/RBI82/randy/tomato.html | Advice on growing tomatoes, along with information on Randy's interests, including dinosaurs, the trombone, and Sun-Tzu's *The Art of War* | To keep plants from falling over, stake them with an 18-in.-by-4-ft. tomato cage made of **dog wire** (a sturdier, taller version of chicken wire). | **The Center for American Archaeology** www.caa-archeology.org **Illinois State Geological Survey** http://www.isgs.uiuc.edu/dinos/sundance.html |
| **TOMATO GROWERS SUPPLY CO.** Linda and Vince Sapp www.tomatogrowers.com | Seeds for black, green, orange, and white tomatoes, as well as for tomatillos and peppers; also for sale: books and posters. | To make homemade salsa, purchase the **Salsa Collection** of seeds ($5.75): LaRoma VF Hybrid, Jalapeno M, Garden Salsa Hybrid, and Toma Verde Tomatillo. | Recipes for **Fresh Tomato Salad Dressing** and for baked stuffed peppers http://www.tomatogrowers.com/recipe.htm |
| **GROWING TOMATOES IN HOUSTON** Donald Ray Burger, attorney at law www.burger.com/tomindex.htm | Advice on everything from fertilizing to controlling fire ants, for vegetable gardeners in the **Lone Star State** | Fall is an excellent time to grow tomatoes in Houston; insect problems are diminished. Put out fall tomatoes during second half of July. | **Hummingbirds in Houston** http://www.burger.com/hbindex.htm **Wildflowers in Texas** http://www.burger.com/wfindex.htm **Gardening on the radio** http://www.burger.com/gardrad.htm |

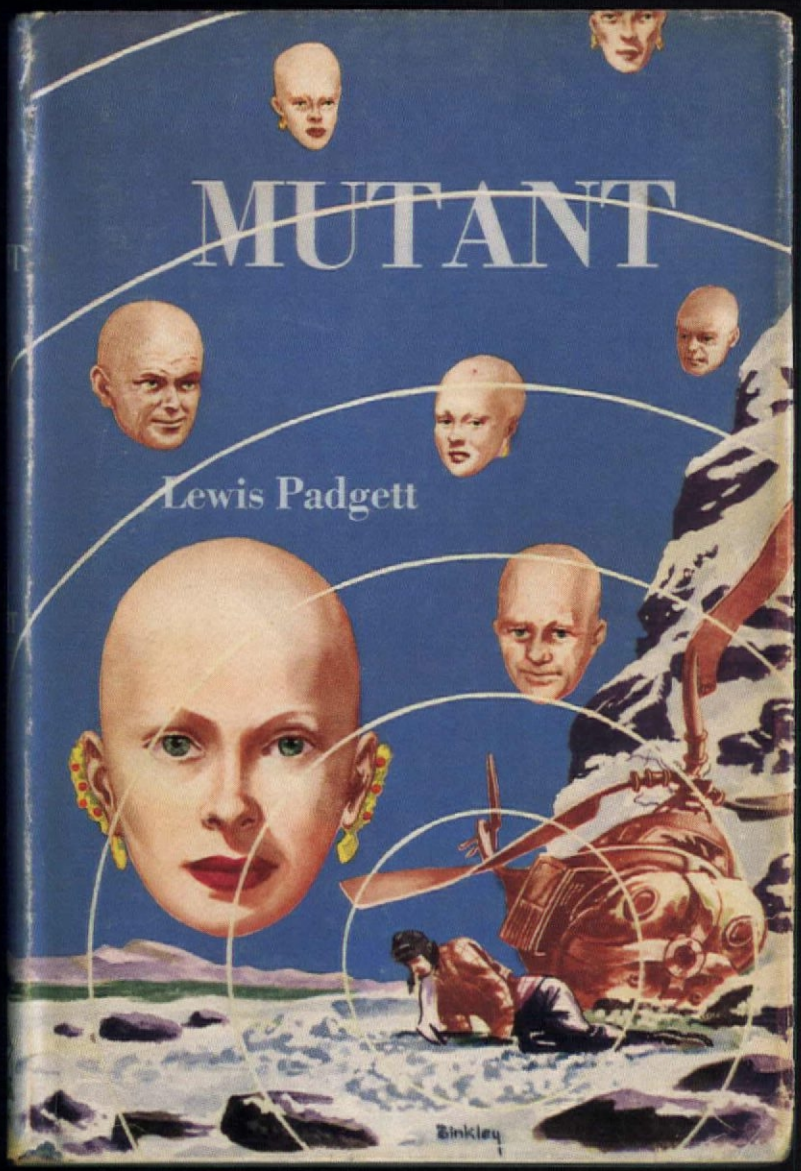
# log on to the simple life

This is a gift to be simple, especially on the Internet. Shakerworkshops.com sells all manner of Shaker-designed things—tables, chairs, baskets, candles, peg boards, cupboards—that are models of clarity and ingenuity. You can buy furniture already finished or, for half the cost and a lot more fun, make it yourself from a kit. If the directions for weaving a chair seat stymie you, the Web site's interactive program will take you through the process. When you're done, sit on your new chair and click on to articles about the legendary Shaker sect, a directory of their sites and museums, or the monthly recipe. There's also a calendar of workshops at Shaker villages around the country—how to make a candle box or an end table, say, or drive a team of horses. Sign us up. —KATRINE AMES




**1. The rock maple chair kit comes with everything, even sandpaper. 2. The back is preassembled; you glue the rest, and apply the stain of your choice. 3. Attach cotton tape in one direction. 4. Weave tape of contrasting color; be seated.**

*April 11, 1977.* Freaked you out so bad you had to bury it.

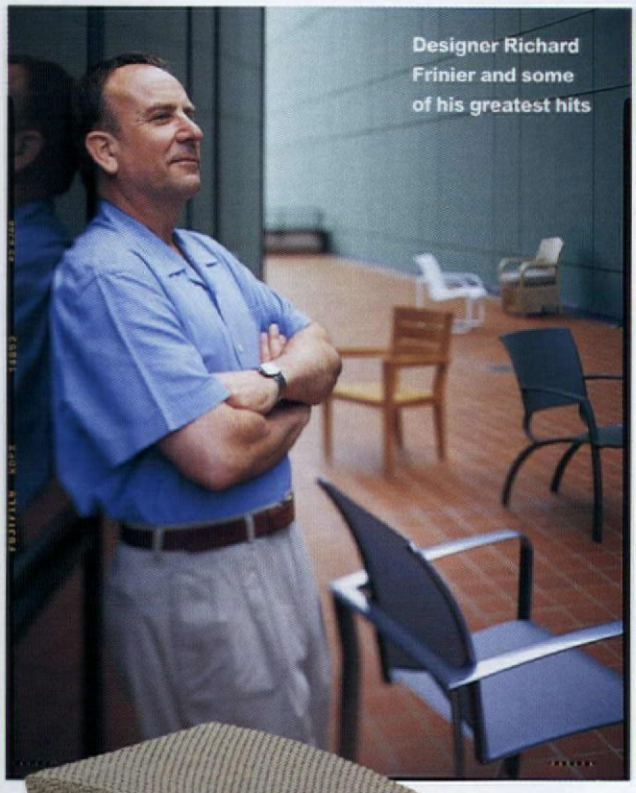



*Jan. 25, 2000.* Unearth on Alibris for son who shares your sci-fi gene.

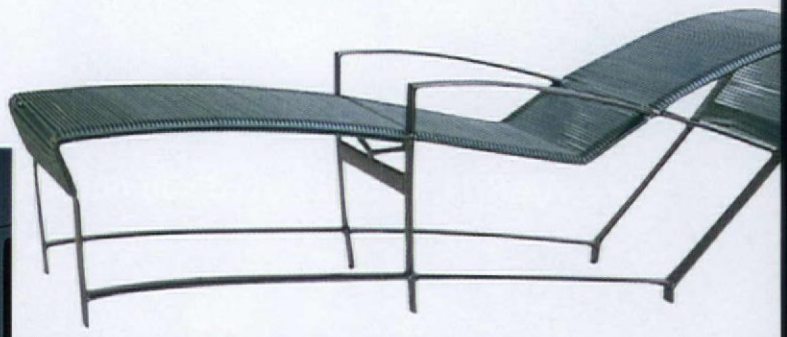
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Designer Richard Frinier and some of his greatest hits



# the king of all outdoors

Richard Frinier is a landscape architect's best friend. The president and founder of DesignResource, the creative division of Brown Jordan, he has spent nearly 20 years designing status pool and patio furniture that helps make backyards beautiful. "The outdoors *is* the biggest room in your house," says Frinier, whose first big hit was 1982's Quantum collection, a modernist group that recalls Alvar Aalto. "That was *my* quantum leap. You see it on the deck of almost every new glass house published in a design magazine." He took another giant step recently with the introduction of the Streamline and Fusion collections. For Streamline, above, he has made seating out of tinted vinyl tubing. "It allows light to pass through, which enlivens the design," he says. Frinier is equally excited about the work that DesignResource does for Casual Living, which sells to Sears and Wal-Mart: "It's an opportunity and privilege to know that your designs can affect so many people."

**The Streamline collection's vinyl tubular seating comes in such colors as Pool, Sun, and Chrome.**

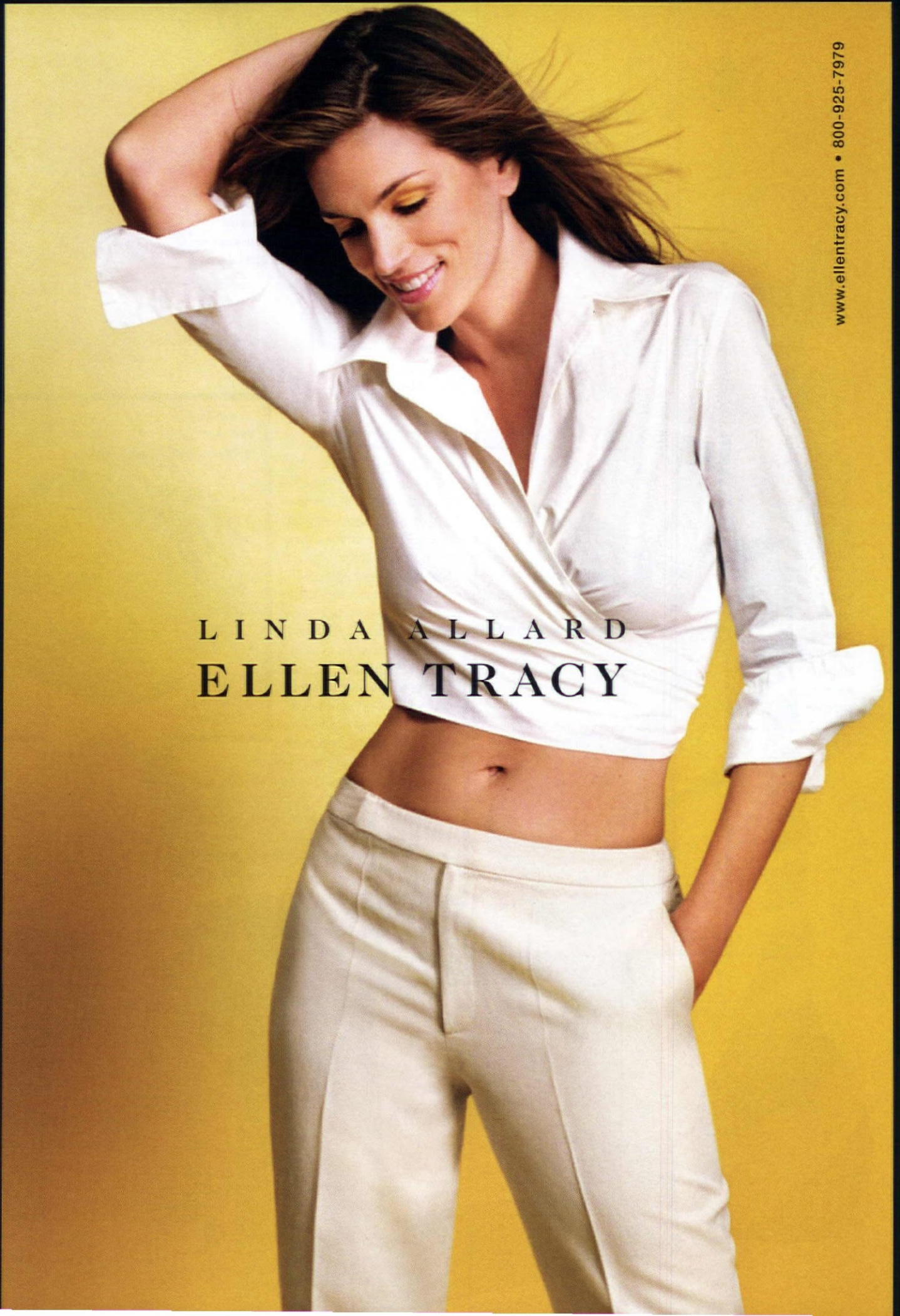


The chaise from the stone-colored Fusion collection

# how to keep them down on the farm




**In 1942, Ed Robinson, an adman at J. Walter Thompson, his wife, Carolyn, a social worker and model, and their young son, Jackie, were prevented from picnicking in New York's Central Park; as a result, they decided to move to the country. To help finance their Connecticut dream house, the couple devised a homesteading plan, figuring they could raise most of their own food on an acre or so and enjoy the fruits of self-sufficiency. Since Ed was as much marketer as farmer, they branded their scheme *The "Have-More" Plan*. That's also the name of their book (Storey Publishing, $9.95), which has been in print for more than half a century. It's filled with advice—still relevant—on such topics as planting a vegetable garden and orchard and deciding how big your flock of squabs should be. It might seem odd that the boy who grew up canning fruit and making compost would become an investment banker. But as president of the Winslow Management Company, Jackson Robinson honors his parents' commitment to healthy living on a healthy planet by investing only in environmentally responsible companies, such as Whole Foods Market, the natural-food grocery chain. "Being environmentally sensitive not only helps the earth," he says, "it helps your portfolio. And we've got the numbers to prove it." —SABINE ROTHMAN**


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# bliss hot goods by brooke stoddard



Silk cocoon bowl, above, by Akihiko Izukura, $250; graphic glass paperweight, right, by Ig Mata, $60





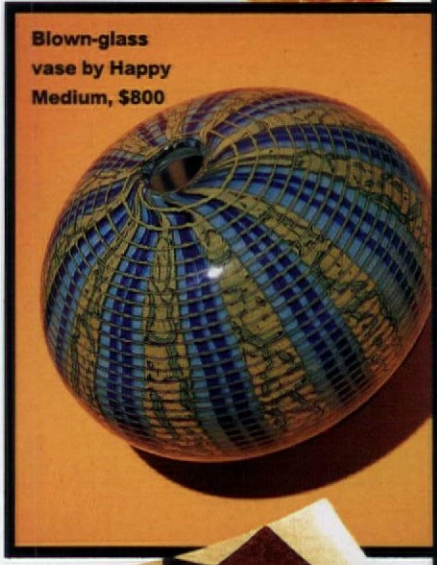
Mid-19th-century Turkish rug pillow, $1,000



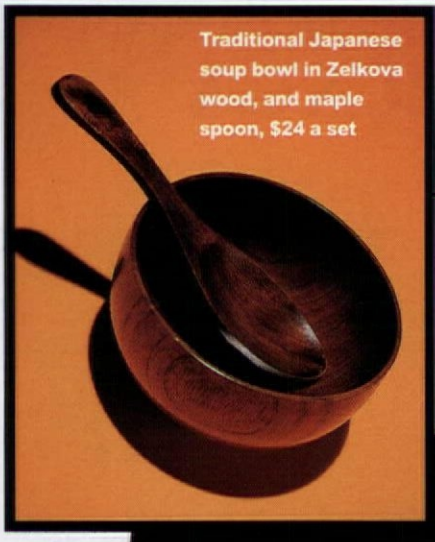
Blown-glass goblets by Charles Provenzano, $250 each

## homing instinct

Walking into Dimson Homma (20 East 67th Street, NYC; 212-439-7950) is like entering the home of the most interesting people you have ever met. Owners Rise Dimson and Robert Homma clearly live their lives guided by their passions for art, traveling (London, Istanbul, Copenhagen, Montana), reading, gardening, and collecting. When they opened their shop four years ago, they edited themselves rigorously. Still, they managed to fill the store with dozens of their favorite things—Michael Vollbracht paintings, blown-glass vases by Michael Anchin, rare first-edition books, Japanese soup bowls, antique sterling silver travel clocks, and vintage toys and dolls. Visiting the store is like taking a trip to an exotic place you've never been to before: you will make discoveries and, with luck, fall in love.



Blown-glass vase by Happy Medium, $800



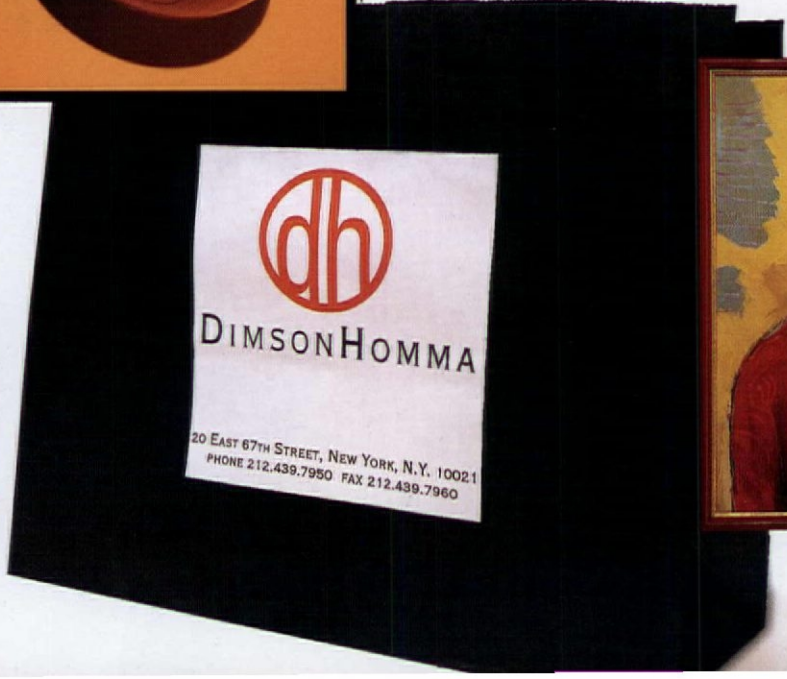
Traditional Japanese soup bowl in Zelkova wood, and maple spoon, $24 a set

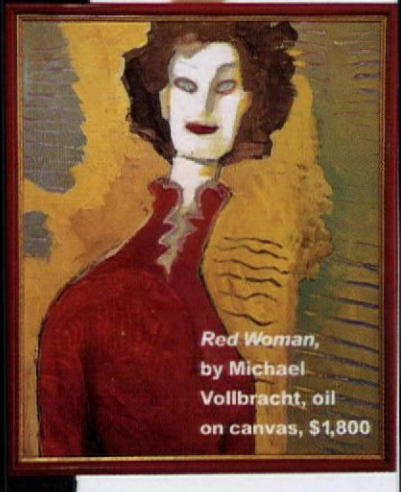


Tall blown-glass vase by Michael Anchin, $375

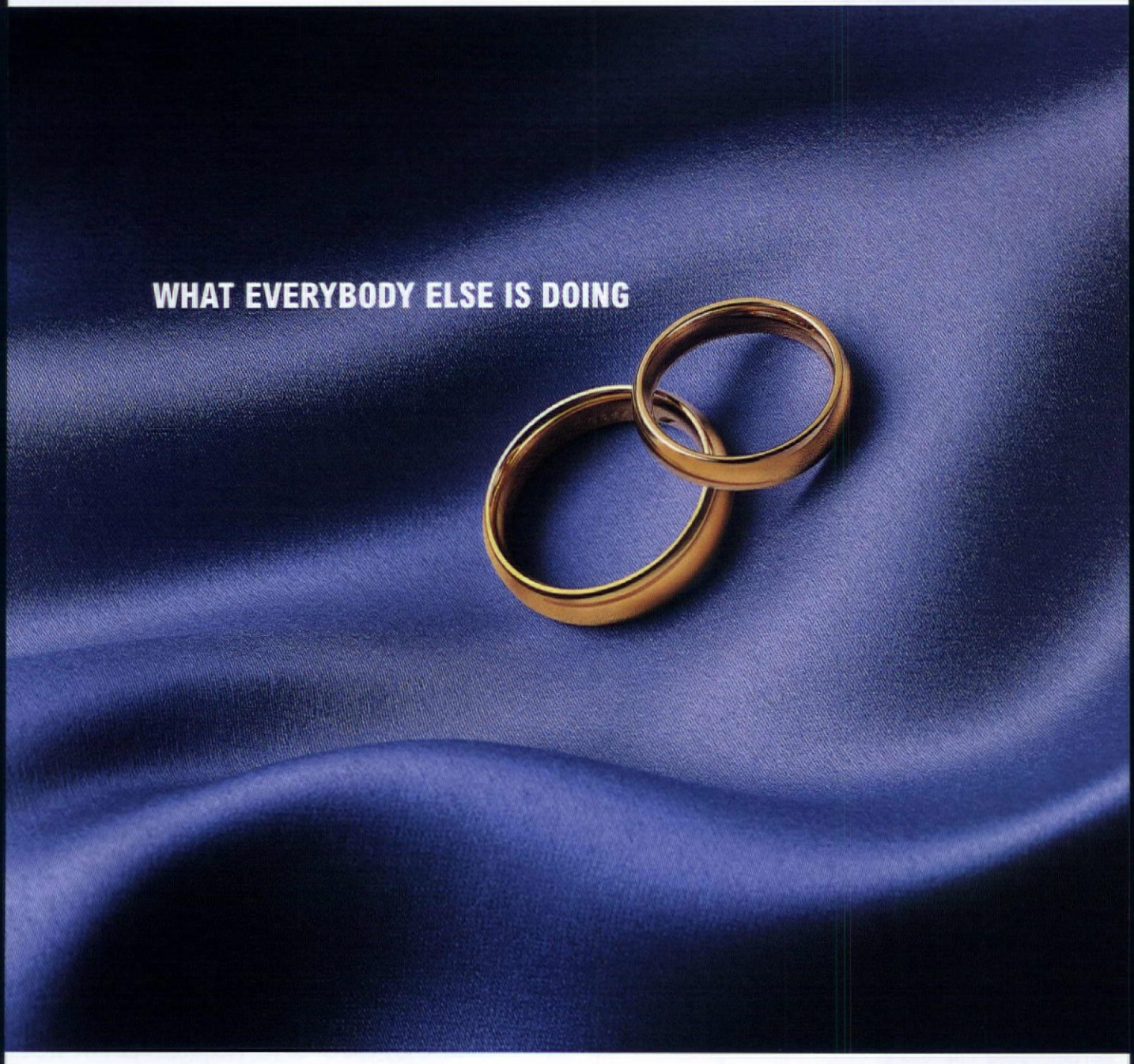


Lacquer trays, $60 (large) and $25 (small)



*Red Woman*, by Michael Vollbracht, oil on canvas, $1,800


WHAT EVERYBODY ELSE IS DOING

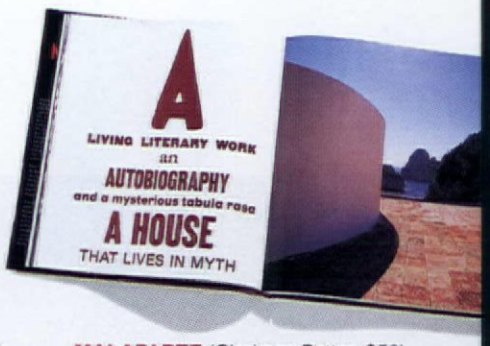
bliss bookcase by lygeia grace

# luscious crop

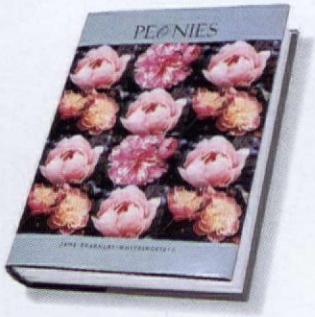
A mysterious, cult house high above the Mediterranean; a sumptuous knot garden on the outskirts of San Francisco; the smoldering, romantic city of Venice: these are places that inflame our hearts and minds. Go ahead and surrender. Sate your desires with this month's irresistible bundle of books.




**RODALE BOOKS** ($25 each) J. I. Rodale is one of the fathers of organic gardening. The zealous tone and kitschy photography of these two reissued classics may cause chuckles, but the advice is still sound.




**MALAPARTE** (Clarkson Potter, $50) Perched on the cliffs of Capri, Malaparte is a design-world legend. In this album, artists from Ed Koren to Philippe Starck sing the praises of the house and the man who built it.




**PEONIES** (Abrams, $35) Delightful archival images of peacocks, peonies, and painted panels grace this sumptuous, exhaustive survey by English gardening guru Jane Fearnley-Whittingstall.



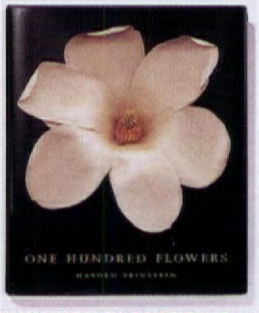
**DAVID HICKS: MY KIND OF GARDEN** (Antique Collectors' Club, $50) Hicks was as fabulously opinionated about gardens as he was about decoration. Some that made the grade: California's Filoli, and his own estate.



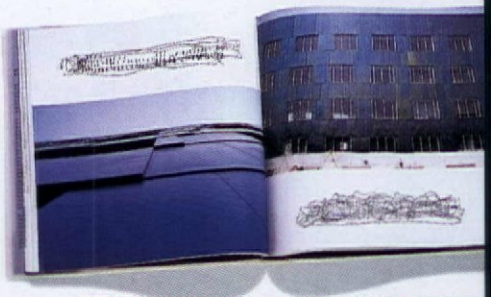
**PUSHKIN PRESS** ($12.95 each) The six volumes of neglected treasures from this small press come jacketed by theme (rose for obsession, blue for Venice). How nice—paperbacks that look as good as they read!



**LIVING WITH CERAMICS** (Rizzoli, $50) Annabel Freyberg is more celebratory than scholarly in this enticing album of houses and rooms, where the star furnishings can be held in your hands.




**ONE HUNDRED FLOWERS** (Bulfinch Press, $50) Harold Feinstein's gorgeous images are almost pornographic in their luscious detail. Can blossoms such as these really exist outside of dreams?



**GEHRY TALKS** (Rizzoli, $65) Wild sketches, funky models, and vivid photography bring 33 of the architect's projects to life. But the real gift in this wonderful book is Gehry's refreshingly lucid and personable text.




REQUIRED READING

## cartoonist bruce eric kaplan's hit list

**DEPRESSION MODERN: THE THIRTIES STYLE IN AMERICA (Universe Books) "This book has been next to my drawing table for years. I've looked at the photographs so many times, they're imprinted on my brain." HIRSCHFELD ON LINE (Applause) "Each drawing is a lesson in elegance and simplicity. And it's incredibly fun. Obviously." THE WRITER'S DESK (Random House) "Photographs of writers, and essays about where they work. Each writer seems so hopeful and respectful about the creative process—it's quite inspiring." JULIUS SHULMAN: ARCHITECTURE AND ITS PHOTOGRAPHY (Taschen) "Okay, okay—I know California architecture has been wildly overexposed, but these photographs are so beautiful. Most of the images in this book break my heart." A COURSE IN MIRACLES (Viking) "When I run out of ideas and get panicked that I'll never have one again, I pick this up to calm myself down. It sometimes works."**




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# waging war on ghastly good taste

A week or so ago, I suddenly found myself, a now voyager, glissading from archaic Chinese pots to minimalist contemporary art. My tour guide was distinguished Belgian art and antiques dealer **Axel Vervoordt**. Involved in dealing since he was 14 and in architectural restoration since he was 21, Vervoordt has, for the past 15 years, made his home, and pursued his business, in a pale, turreted, fifteenth-century moated castle outside Antwerp.

Clients such as **Bill Blass** and **Nina Griscom**, virtually any European royal worthy of an HRH or an SAR, and designers such as **Dries van Noten** have found their way to this enchanted taste headquarters.

Vervoordt's castle is a home for his wife and family, as well as a glorious stage, set by him, with constantly evolving rooms full of extraordinary objects. He is not keen on the GGT (ghastly good taste) of a room furnished only with matching eighteenth-century furniture. ("I don't like it—too much surface decoration and gilt for me.") No. Vervoordt has swashbuckling taste, which allows him to make connections throughout the entire history of culture. He mixes, for instance, a huge Sung jade piece with a Fontana slash painting, a rough shepherd's table from the Pyrenees with sixteenth-century wooden-and-ivory turned urns. Heavily carved seventeenth- and eighteenth-century frames lend gravitas and amusement to **Picasso**'s enchanting matchbox paintings, executed for his mistress **Dora Maar**.




At the other end of the scale, a huge painting by **Antoni Tapies** hangs from floor to ceiling in a room with Fontana's Natura ball; opposite is a Ming chair of abraded elm.

"I think the twentieth century has been a century that made a lot of new things in plastic that were used once and thrown away," says Vervoordt, over a jolly lunch shared with the black-leather-clad members of **Ars Musica**, an avant-garde music ensemble from Brussels. "There is no more space to store everything the twentieth century has thrown away; but I think the twenty-first century is going to be one of recovery, of valuing things from the past and using them in new ways."

Now Vervoordt has acquired another stage for his eclectic endeavors, a former grain store and distillery. Here, against rough cement floors or brick walls, illuminated by vast industrial spotlights and serenaded by the sounds of mating frogs (thanks to Ars Musica), Vervoordt and his sons **Boris** and **Dick** are projecting a radical view of how to live and be inspired by great works of art. They believe that this new context, with its sharp contrasts, will suit twenty-first-century life. "For the future, you know, people will want space, peace, and freedom," says Vervoordt, "and therefore, what they live with must be rigorously organized within space."

The ground floor of the grain store gives a numinous impression, like the temple of Karnak, and is devoted to mysterious, often headless, Khmer and Buddhist statues, together with sculptural fragments of the ancient world. In the distillery, Vervoordt has placed extraordinary furniture in huge spaces. A Baroque fruitwood console, for instance, is placed against a whitewashed brick wall, which gives it authority and edge. A group of candelabra by **Paul Storr** are so much more eloquent, not to say grandiloquent, when seen in sharp contrast to a red brick wall. A collection of library steps and ladders form abstract shapes in another room.

Seeing these grand and not so grand works anew, thrust out of their cozy times-past context into a minimal, even industrial environment, gave my eye a healthy shock. Looking at the huge volumes of the silos and at the vaulted red brick halls punctuated by wonderful furniture and objects, each in its own serene space, I think I understood that the apparent dead end of late-twentieth-century industrial minimalism will, in fact, open out into the next chapter of taste.



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From left: Mehrab silk curtain panel, Anichini; Iguana cotton sheets, Sybilla at Naturemorte; Mary Ellen silk duvet, Sové; Jardinière and Italian Floral silk fabrics, Embroidery Palace; Tamora cotton fabric, Jane Churchill, through Cowtan & Tout; Cintamani wool throw, Allegra Hicks Design.

# ornamental threads

Embroidery is experiencing a renaissance. "We've moved past the days of highly computerized embroidery on towels," says Janet Rodriquez, owner of Embroidery Palace in Los Angeles. Working with a talented staff and vintage sewing machines, she fulfills requests from decorators who want to embellish lampshades, draperies, valances, headboards, and ottomans. In India, entire villages are being reinvigorated by the demand for hand-produced needlework—a skill that is often passed down from generation to generation, according to Phil Sadick, co-owner of Chelsea Textiles in New York. In a world obsessed with the future, how appealing that even the newest embroidery has a sensuous link to the past.

Top and bottom pillows from Royal Hut; middle pillow from Tana Bana.

Chair, right, dressed in Embroidery Palace's quilted diamond needlework. Mule and purse, below, Chelsea Textiles.


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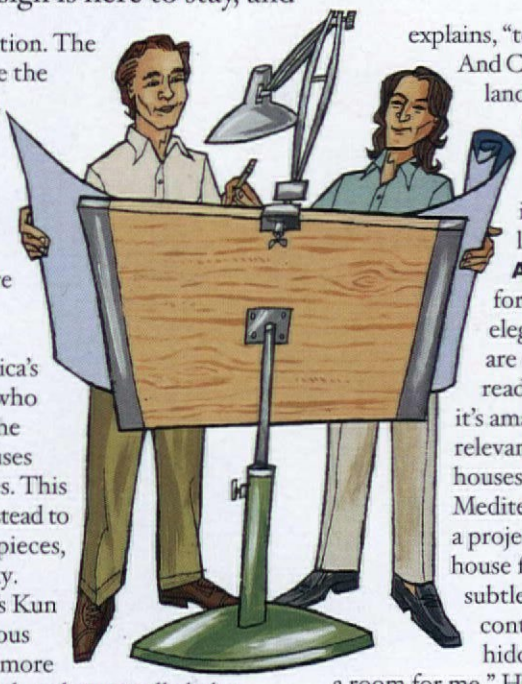
by paul fortune






# who ya gonna call?

I know it sounds as though I'm banging on about midcentury modernism all the time, but in case you haven't noticed, it *is* the twenty-first century. (Okay, it's not till 2001.) Still, doesn't "midtwentieth century" sound just the way "midnineteenth century" used to? Anyway, to get to my point, midtwentieth-century design is here to stay, and everyone wants a piece of the action. The first thing you have to do is score the house—**Ellwood, Neutra, Koenig**, whoever—*just get one.* Second, you must sell your firstborn to pay for this money pit. Finally, you must find an architect who is sympathetic to this school and who will research and restore your baby to within an inch of its former glory—and beyond.



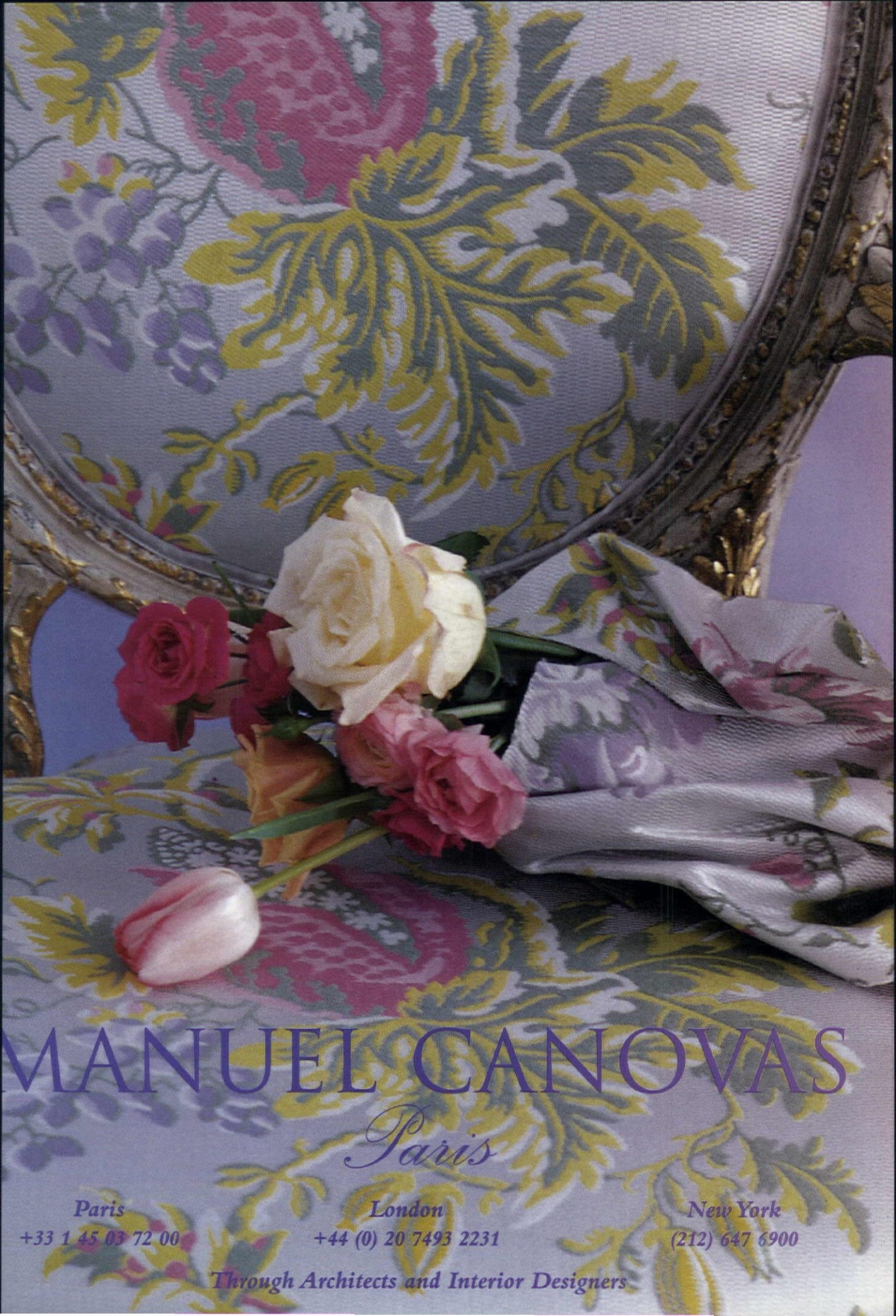
The boys to hire are Santa Monica's **Leo Marmol** and **Ron Radziner**, who cut their restoring teeth fixing the mistakes that they found on houses designed by their contemporaries. This apprenticeship put them in good stead to work on the modernists' masterpieces, whose roofs are notoriously leaky. Their first client owned Neutra's Kun House No. 2, which needed serious help. The boys made everything more than beautiful again. Word spread, and eventually led to their restoring Neutra's **Kaufmann House** in Palm Springs for **Brent** and **Beth Harris**, which set the restoration bar at an Olympian level. One of their next projects was overhauling the Brown house in Bel Air for Gucci's **Tom Ford**; it also allowed them to one-up Neutra by using materials that had proved too costly for Mr. Brown.

"We love to explore the architectural history of L.A.," Marmol says. "It's a great education, but we also like to balance it out with something less high-profile. We recently completed a child-care center at LAX and are currently working on a school project in South Central L.A." Now that sounds very midtwenty-first century—architects with a social conscience.

## star turn

One diversion that Hollywood still has to offer is star sighting. At the recent opening on La Brea of the newly expanded studios of interior designer **Kerry Joyce**, guests were treated to the spectacle of the leggy **Julie Newmar** draped languidly over a file cabinet. Very Catwoman. "I've had to expand," Joyce explains, "to accommodate a huge demand by clients." And Catwoman is one? "No, she's my very glamorous landlady!" Landwoman? Catlady? What was my point? Right, Kerry Joyce's reputation is growing, and not just on the West Coast. The house he designed for **Ian Schrager** in the Hamptons was much admired, and landed him a commission to redecorate **Andy Warhol**'s old Manhattan town house for MTV honcho **Tom Freston**. Joyce's clean, elegant style has a modern edge, but its roots are definitely nineteenth century. "I've just read **Elsie de Wolfe**'s *House in Good Taste,* and it's amazing," Joyce says. "Her opinions are totally relevant to today." Currently, he's building four houses—in four different styles (from French Mediterranean to Cape Cod!). "When I complete a project, it has the feel of a solid, well-built house from the thirties," Joyce says, "but with subtle improvements that accommodate the contemporary client's needs. Technology is hidden. A badly placed A.C. switch can ruin a room for me." He's also trying to expand beyond his love of white and beige and gray. "I'm working on this," he confides. "For the Freston project, I've found some beautiful saffron-colored silk to make into huge curtains for the dining room. I'm a little nervous, but I think it will look amazing." Go for it, Kerry. I hear that saffron is the new white!




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bliss larder by lora zarubin

# garden brew

*Herbal infusions are one of my favorite ways to end a meal. Refreshing and subtly flavored, they cleanse the palate and pique the senses without the caffeine of tea or coffee. Rather than use dried herbs, which can be bitter and intense, I steep fresh leaves. My favorite sources are Indian Rock Produce (800-882-0512) and the magnificently obsessed John Lingle, whose organic herb catalog (800-708-0633) runs from belladonna (deadly nightshade) to pink rosemary. As for presentation, there's nothing cooler than the infusion trolley filled with pots of herbs at Alain Ducasse's restaurant in Monte Carlo. And chez Zarubin? I bring out a tray of plants that I've put into vintage terra-cotta pots. Guests snip their choices for the ultimate custom blend.*




With my grape **shears** from Berkeley Horticultural Nursery (510-526-4704), guests can cut their own leaves.




I love glass teapots, because you can watch the color of your drink change as it brews. But I never use the infusers that come with them; for real flavor, leaves need room to steep.

I'm obsessed with the elegant and simple lines of the MoMA Design Store's Kyoto **glass teapot**.



**Glass teapots** go with every table setting. Pot and mugs, at Ad Hoc (in NYC, 212-925-2652).





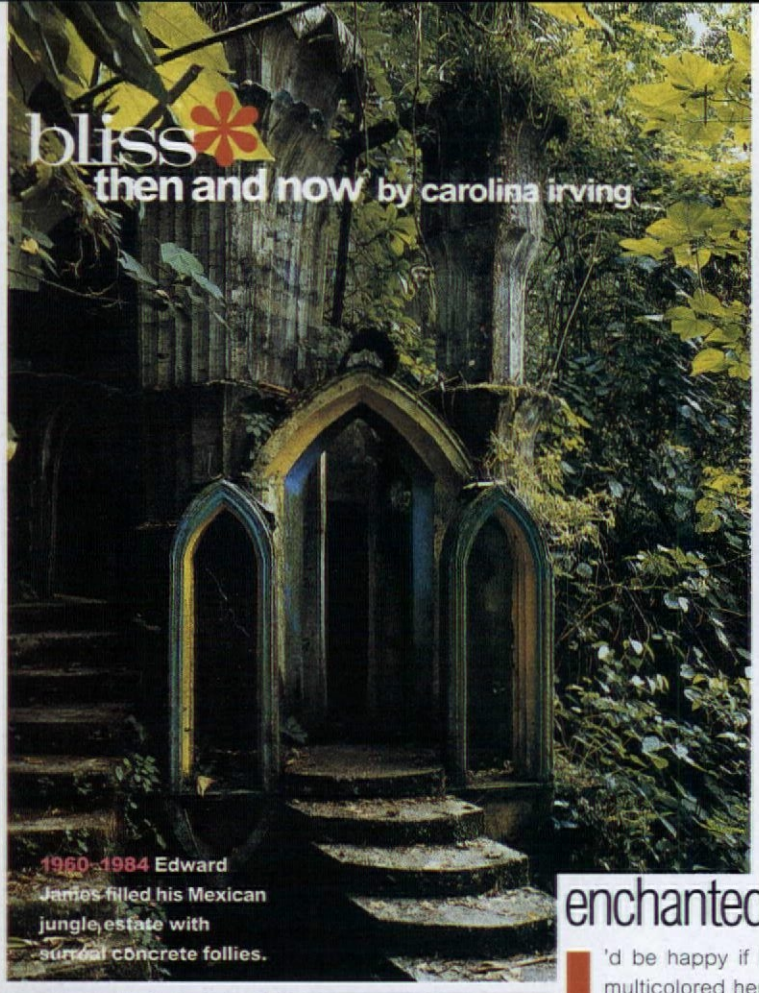

Ad Hoc's industrial tray complements the lacy elegance of Moroccan **tea glasses**, from the Gardener (in CA, 510-548-4545).

For intimate gatherings, I steep single servings right in the cup. Glass **teacups**, at the MoMA Design Store (800-793-3167); zinc **tray**, at Troy (in NYC, 212-941-4777).

I can never get enough of the soft, citrusy flavor of **lemon verbena** and **Meyer lemon peel**. It's a combination that I love to serve at the end of dinner parties.

L. Becker Flowers in New York (212-439-6001) has a wonderful trove of **antique glass** and vintage terra-cotta pots.

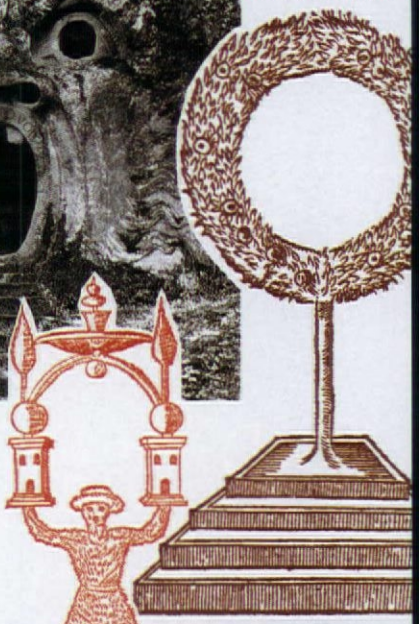

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1960–1984 Edward James filled his Mexican jungle estate with surreal concrete follies.



1560s A fantasti of stone monste giants populates grounds of Boma outside Rome.



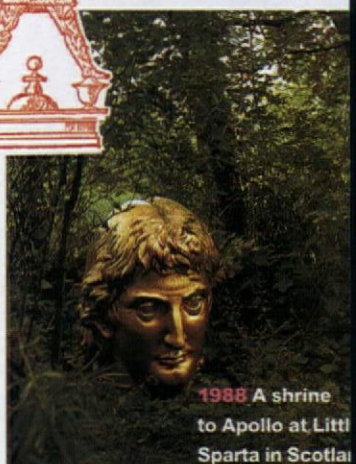
1546 The incredible topiary drawings in *Le Songe de Poliphile* have inspired generations of designers.

# enchanted gardens

I'd be happy if I didn't see another multicolored herbaceous border for as long as I live! Nothing inspires me less. What I do love is a sense of magic. Gardens should enchant and transport, like the fantastic landscapes and topiaries described in the sixteenth-century book *Le Songe de Poliphile*. This classic volume has influenced the design of some of my favorite green spaces. From the haunting statuary of Bomarzo to the Villa d'Ayala's surreal amphitheater, these mysterious and emblematic gardens were designed to astonish through artificial devices like grottoes, mirrors, musical waterworks, and automatons. The enchanted garden may have reached its apotheosis in the sixteenth-century dreamworld of Hellbrunn, but its spirit lives today in Edward James's surreal wonderland and in Ian Hamilton Finlay's Little Sparta.



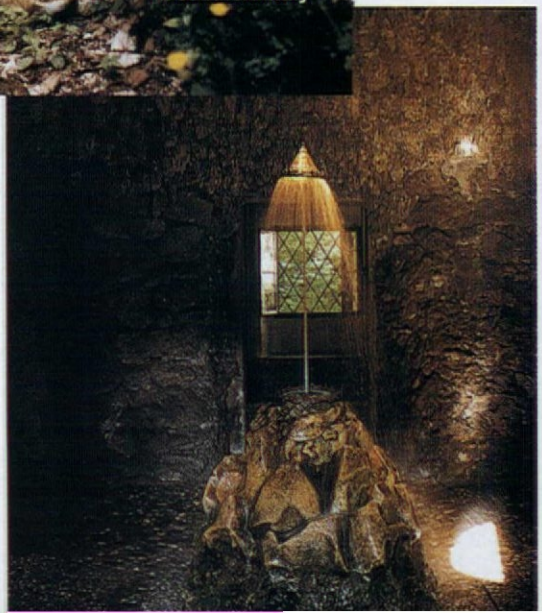
1700s The amphitheater at the Villa d'Ayala in southern Italy



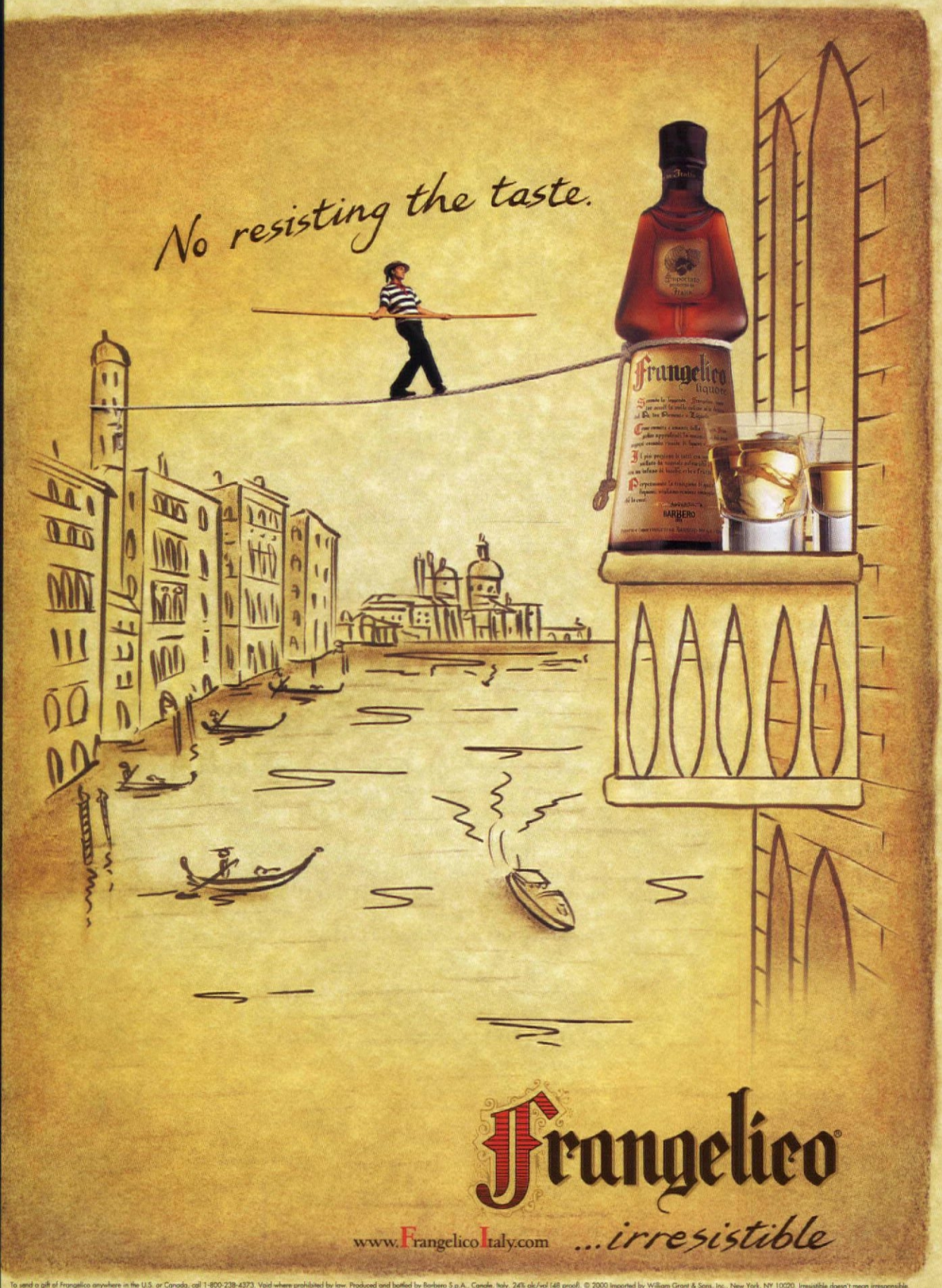
1988 A shrine to Apollo at Littl Sparta in Scotla



1950s Nancy Lancaster used a mirror in her garden at Haseley Court in England.



1600s A golden crown dances atop a jet of water in one of the many grottoes of Austria's Hellbrunn.




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garden bliss by carol king



# constant craving

## Carnivorous plants are finally getting a place at the table

Although vegetarianism is becoming increasingly popular among human beings, carnivorous plants pay no attention to fads. But oddly enough, the fact that carnivorous plants are becoming a fad in their own right may just save them from extinction. More than 95 percent of the wetlands that were home to carnivorous plants in the Southeast have been destroyed. Patios and sunny windowsills may soon be the only places where these plants survive.

Vanishing habitats aside, the best reason to grow carnivorous plants is that they are beautiful, colorful, and easy to grow, once you know what they need. Venus flytraps are the best known, and seemingly the most accident-prone, plants on the carnivorous market, usually dying within days of coming into the possession of an 11-year-old boy.

"Mom, can I have a snake and feed it mice?"

"No, Freddy."

"Then, can I have a piranha, and feed it goldfish?"

"No!"

"Then, can I have a Venus flytrap, and feed it flies?"

"Well. Okay."

Sadly, the only item that is sure to die is the flytrap. Growing carnivorous plants is not difficult. It's just different.

Most carnivorous plants grow in nutrient-deficient wet soil, where they have no source of sustenance other than the little protein packages that they catch. Many carnivorous plants lure insects with an intoxicating, narcotic nectar that their prey fall into and drown in. "A happy little death," says Marilee Maertz, co-owner of California Carnivores, a mail-order source for such carnivorous plants as American pitcher plants, Cape sundews, bladderworts, and, to warm the hearts of preadolescent boys, good-old flytraps.

Many carnivores are grown best in containers. Most will thrive in a soil mix of half sphagnum peat and half Perlite, dampened with either rainwater or low-sodium distilled water. Ordinary tap water is fatal to most Venus flytraps.

Maertz says, "If you can learn to grow a flytrap, you can grow just about any carnivorous plant." The planting and care of carnivores is simple. After adding the prepared soil to a container, make appropriate-sized holes in the soil, unpot the carnivores, tuck them in, and gently firm the soil around them. Carnivores are the perfect pot plants for those who have a tendency to overwater. In the fall, let hardy carnivores go dormant in a chilly space such as a garage, and bring the tropicals inside to winter on a sunny windowsill. An occasional dried-insect delicacy from the pet shop will keep housebound plants happy until summer, when they can fend for themselves outside.

All that these plants require is sunshine and rainwater.

They know how to feed themselves.

**RESOURCES**

**NURSERY**

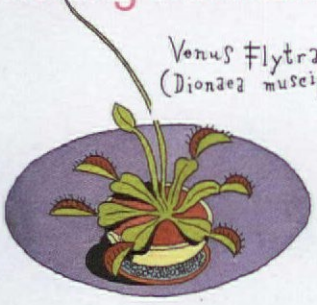
**California Carnivores**
**7020 Trenton-Healdsburg Road**
**Forestville, CA**
**707-838-1630**
**www.californiacarnivores.com**

**BOOK**

***The Savage Garden: Cultivating Carnivorous Plants*, by Peter D'Amato (Ten Speed Press)**

## having the munchies

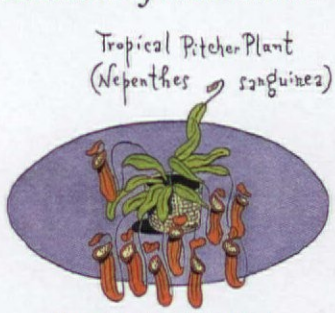
*An easy-to-grow selection of meat eaters* — STEPHEN ORR




**Perfect for a sunny windowsill. It's best to trim off the traps of these carnivores after their postprandial withering.**



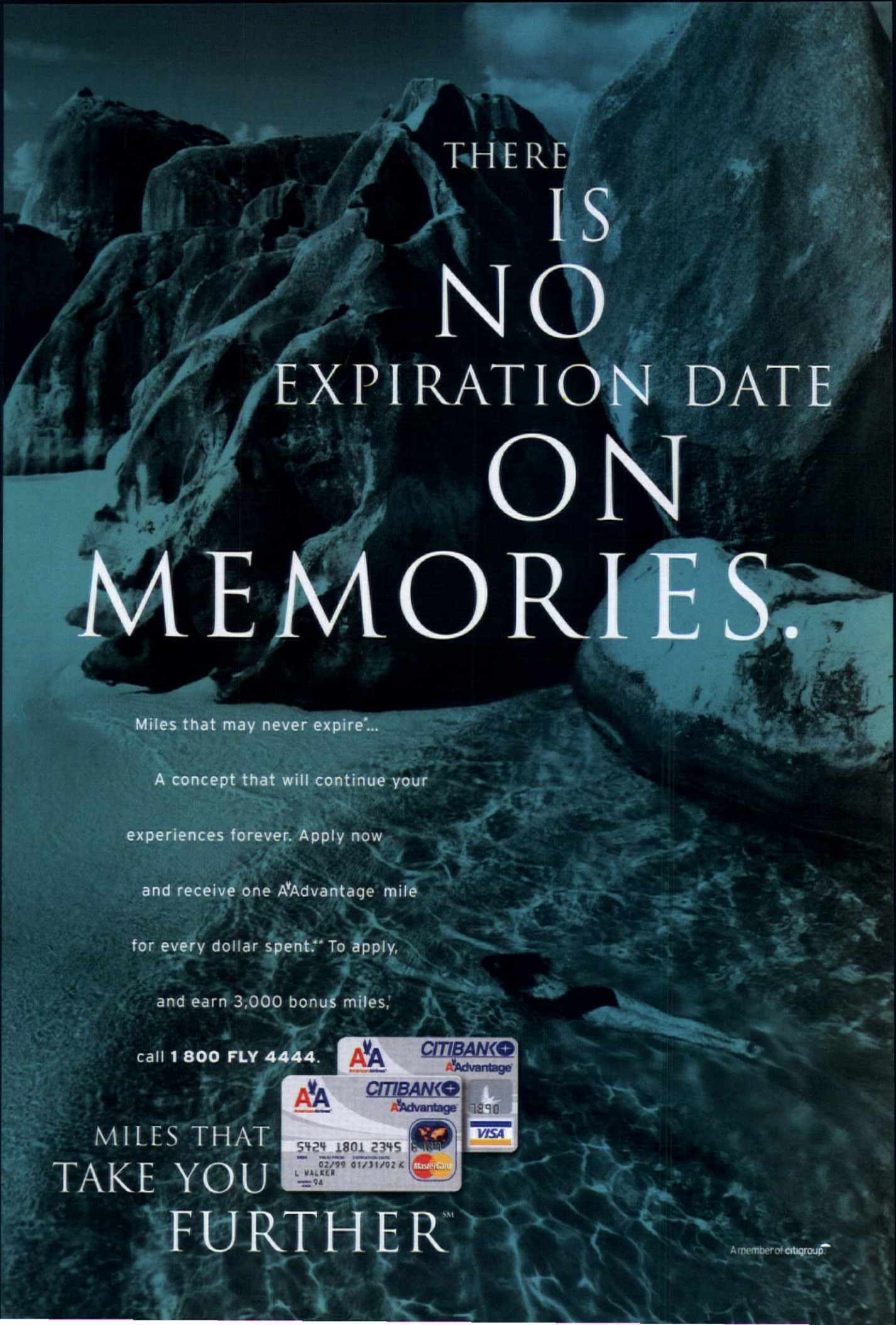

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# hunting & gathering



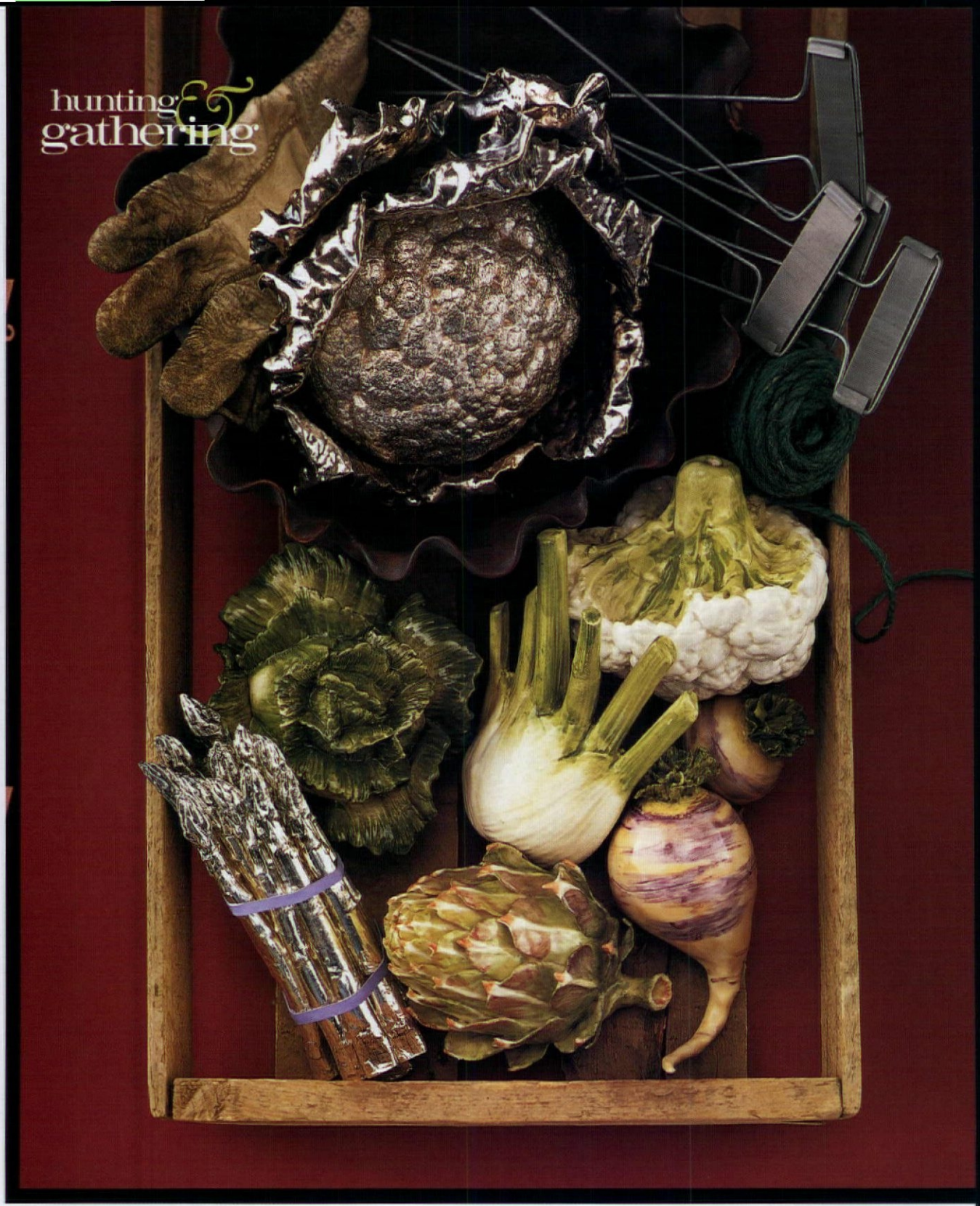
**PEAR-FECT FAKES**
Three hand-painted ceramic William Red pears with wooden stems, $32 each, from Gardens, Austin, TX. 512-451-5490.

# forbidden fruit

These pears may look **ripe** enough to eat, but whatever you do, **do not take a bite**. For while this fruit may look **uncannily real**, it—like the other edibles featured on these pages—is **faux**. They are the work of decorative artists who are taking inspiration from their **gardens** and from farmers' markets filled with **heirloom varieties** of fruits and vegetables. It's **food for thought**.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LISA CHARLES WATSON PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER

# hunting & gathering



FROM A PORCELAIN TURNIP to a sterling silver asparagus bunch, replicas of fruits and vegetables are being fashioned in a variety of media. Boston artist Katherine Houston, who created the hard-paste porcelain turnips and acorn squash shown here, cites influences

**CORNUCOPIA From top: The Purple Cabbage stoneware serving bowl, $135, designed by Patricia Garrett for Great Impressions, is available from the Gardener, Berkeley, CA. 510-548-4545. Sitting inside is a sterling silver Buccellati cauliflower tureen, $7,200, which comes with a glass liner for holding soups. 800-223-7885. The cauliflower and fennel bulb, $20 each, from a set of nine ceramic vegetables, and wild lettuce box, $34, are all from Vietri. 800-277-5933. Katherine Houston designed the porcelain turnips, $525 for a pair, available from Scully and Scully, NYC. 800-223-3717. Lady Anne Gordon's handmade, glazed-porcelain artichoke is from Hinson & Co., NYC. The asparagus, made in a silver-coated mold, $50, is from Ruzzetti & Gow, NYC. 212-643-0096.**



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from Dutch still-life paintings to English botanicals. Trained as an artist in an era of abstract expressionism, she nevertheless has always been drawn to realistic representations of nature. "An orange isn't completely round, or completely orange," Houston says. "I try to study what makes it unique." Humbler objects, perhaps, but just as lifelike, are the $12 wood-resin fruits that are a popular item at Avery on Bond, a New York antiques and furniture store, where

**YOU'RE PLUM STRAIGHT** **The lifelike quality of the faux fruits, including apples and pears, at the New York City antiques and furniture shop Avery on Bond, has led more than one visitor to believe that they were the real thing. The half-dozen dark wood-resin plums, $12 each, above, are particularly realistic and popular. Available from Avery on Bond, NYC. 212-614-1492.**

# Priorities Change.



To the trade. Photo: Paul Robinson

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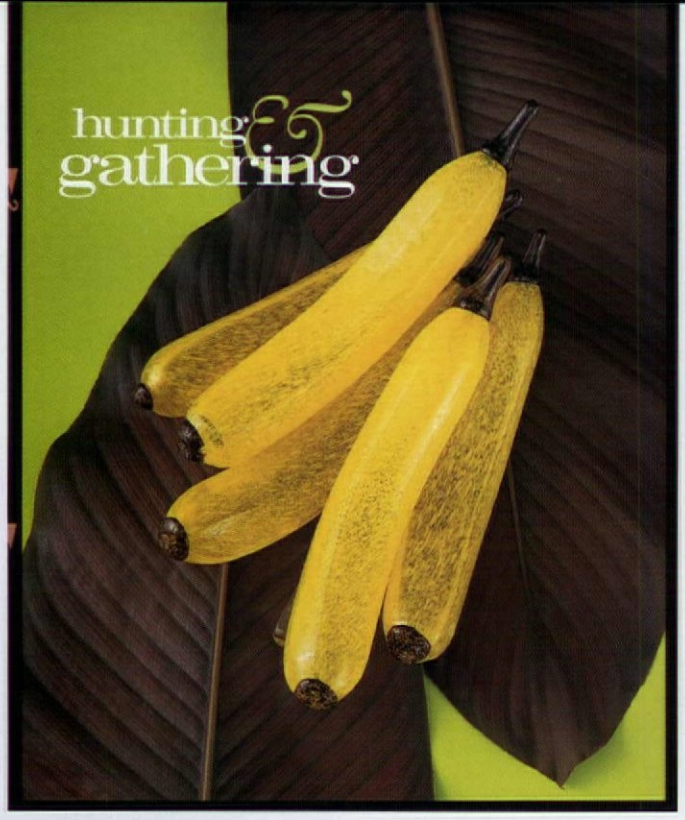
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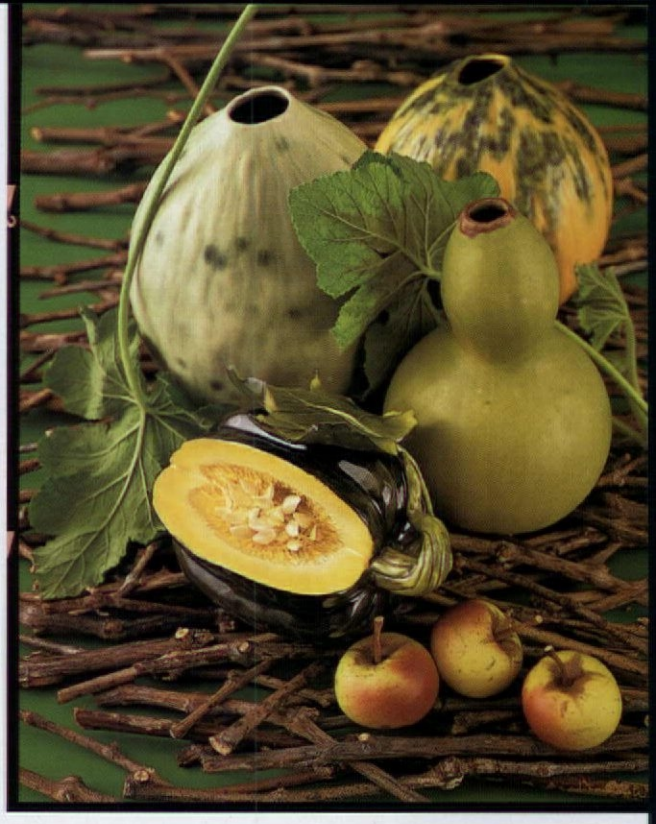
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# hunting & gathering





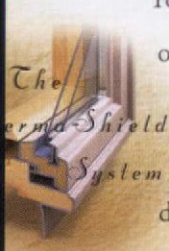




**A FEAST FOR THE EYES** Top row, left: Gunnel Sahlin designed the Frutteria glass bananas, $60 each, for Kosta Boda. The bananas are hand-fashioned, making each one unique. They are available from the Gallery Orrefors Kosta Boda, NYC. 800-351-9842. Top row, right: The stoneware muskmelon vase, $38, and stoneware casaba vase, $37, are available from the Gardener. The Opu vase, $32, is available from the Source Perrier Collection. Real melons and gourds are used as molds for the vases, all of which are by Great Impressions. The three hand-painted ceramic lady apples in the foreground, $32 each, have wooden stems, were made in England, and are available from Gardens, Austin, TX. 512-451-5490. Katherine Houston's porcelain acorn squash in the front, $695, is available from Scully and Scully, NYC. Bottom row, left: The still-life sculpture *Figs on a White Plate*, $64, was made in northern Italy of hand-painted, glazed terra-bianca clay, and is available from Vietri. Bottom row, right: The *pate de verre* crystal limes with bronze leaves, $200 each, are made in France and are available from the Daum Boutique, NYC, 212-355-2060; or by mail order from L'Art de Vivre, 800-411-6515. The wood-resin lemons, $12 each, are available from Avery on Bond.




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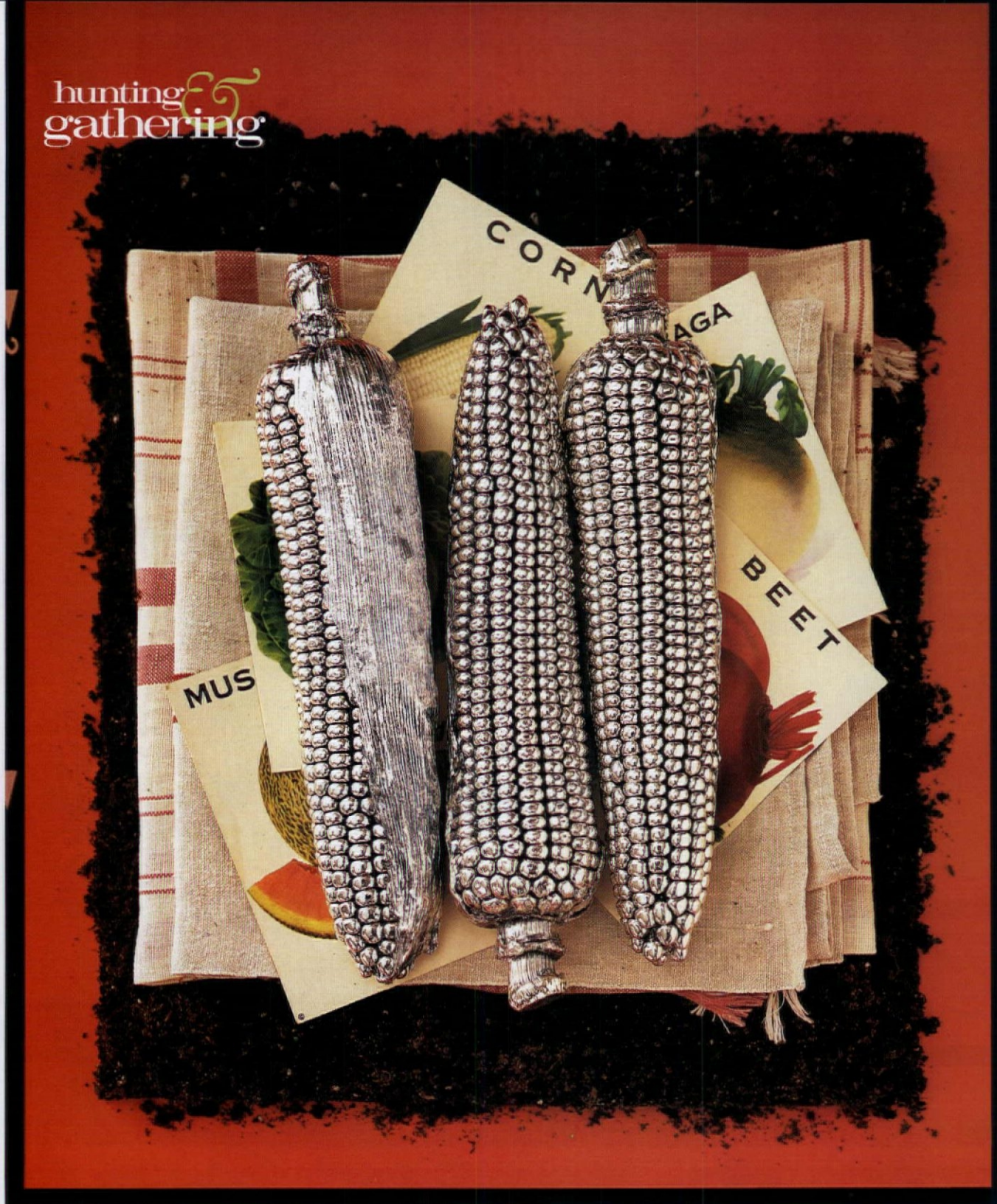



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one customer recently purchased 60 of the faux plums. "Everyone wants that fresh bowl of fruit on the table, but who actually wants to maintain it?" Randy McDannell, the shop's co-owner, asks. And if you're amazed by the detail in Ruzzetti & Gow's silver ears of corn, it is because they were molded from the real thing. "Obviously, God is the ultimate designer," says owner Christopher Gow. "We just embellish His work." —INGRID ABRAMOVITCH

**PRICK UP YOUR EARS** **New York–based designers Christopher Gow and Giampiero Ruzzetti of Ruzzetti & Gow hand-pick perfectly formed fruit and vegetables, and have molds made of their shapes. The forms are then dipped into sterling silver, creating decorative objects, such as these ears of corn, $120 each. Available from Mecox, NYC. 212-249-5301. Sources, see back of book.**





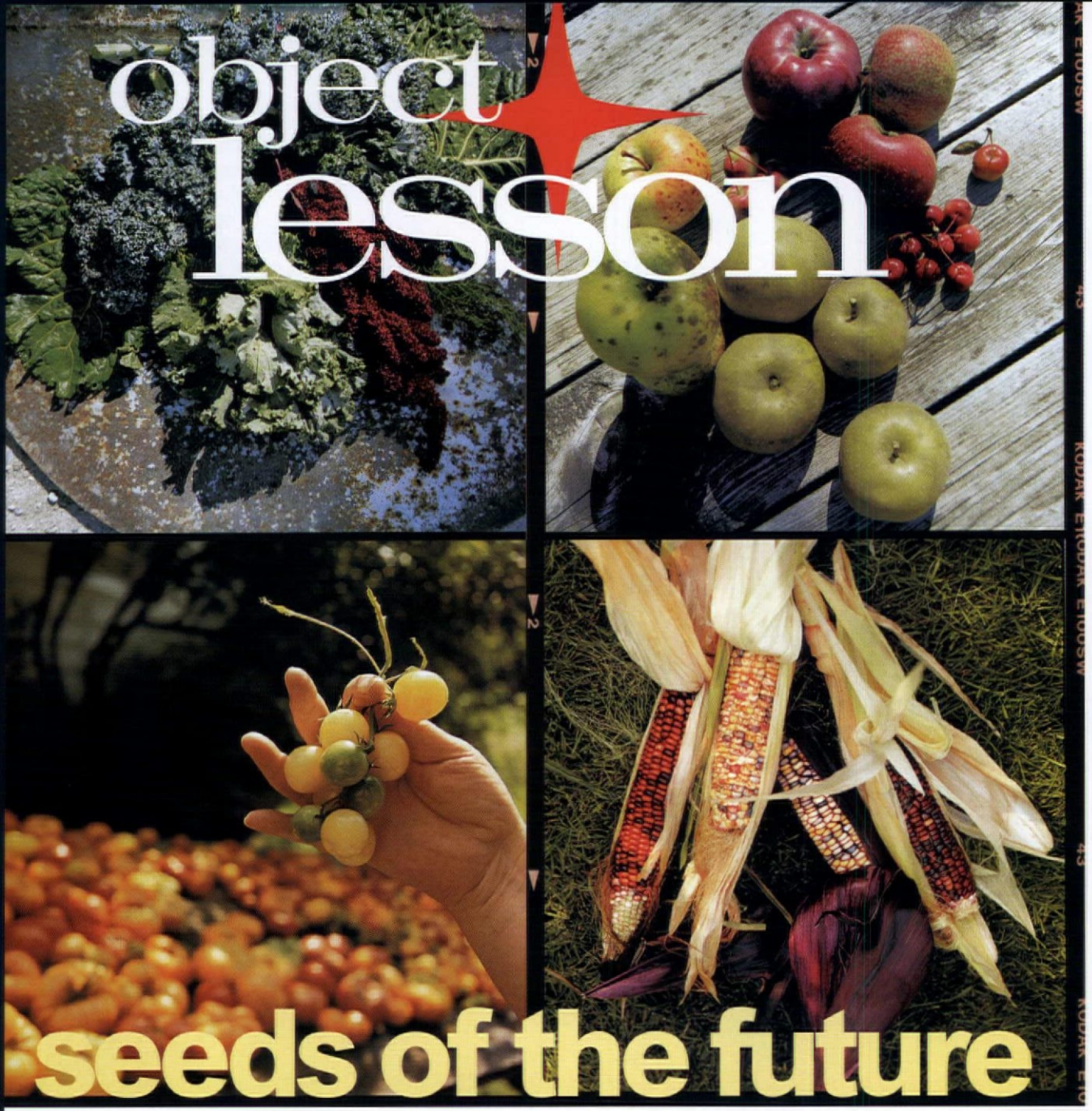
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# object lesson

# seeds of the future

**who** the people behind the organic food movement
**what** the difference between a tasteless tomato and a sun-ripened 'Red Brandywine'
**where** in seed exchanges, organic farms, and natural food stores across the country
**why** to supply food that's nutritious and filled with great, old-fashioned flavor

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE. Bioengineering. Genetically modified organisms. Don't let these buzzwords scare you. They're about the food you eat: the cornflakes on your spoon, the tomatoes in your yard. This month, we profile seven people who have made it their business to ensure that what goes into our mouths is healthy and safe. Through their example, at home or at work, these visionaries are making a global difference in the world of growing food.

WRITTEN BY STEPHEN ORR PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEFAN STUDER

PRODUCED BY CHARLOTTE M. FRIEZE

object lesson



**STAR POWER** Nell Newman enjoys the garden at the University of California at Santa Cruz Research Center. The business she co-owns, Newman's Own Organics, donates money for organic farming and gardening research at the university.

**organic munchies**

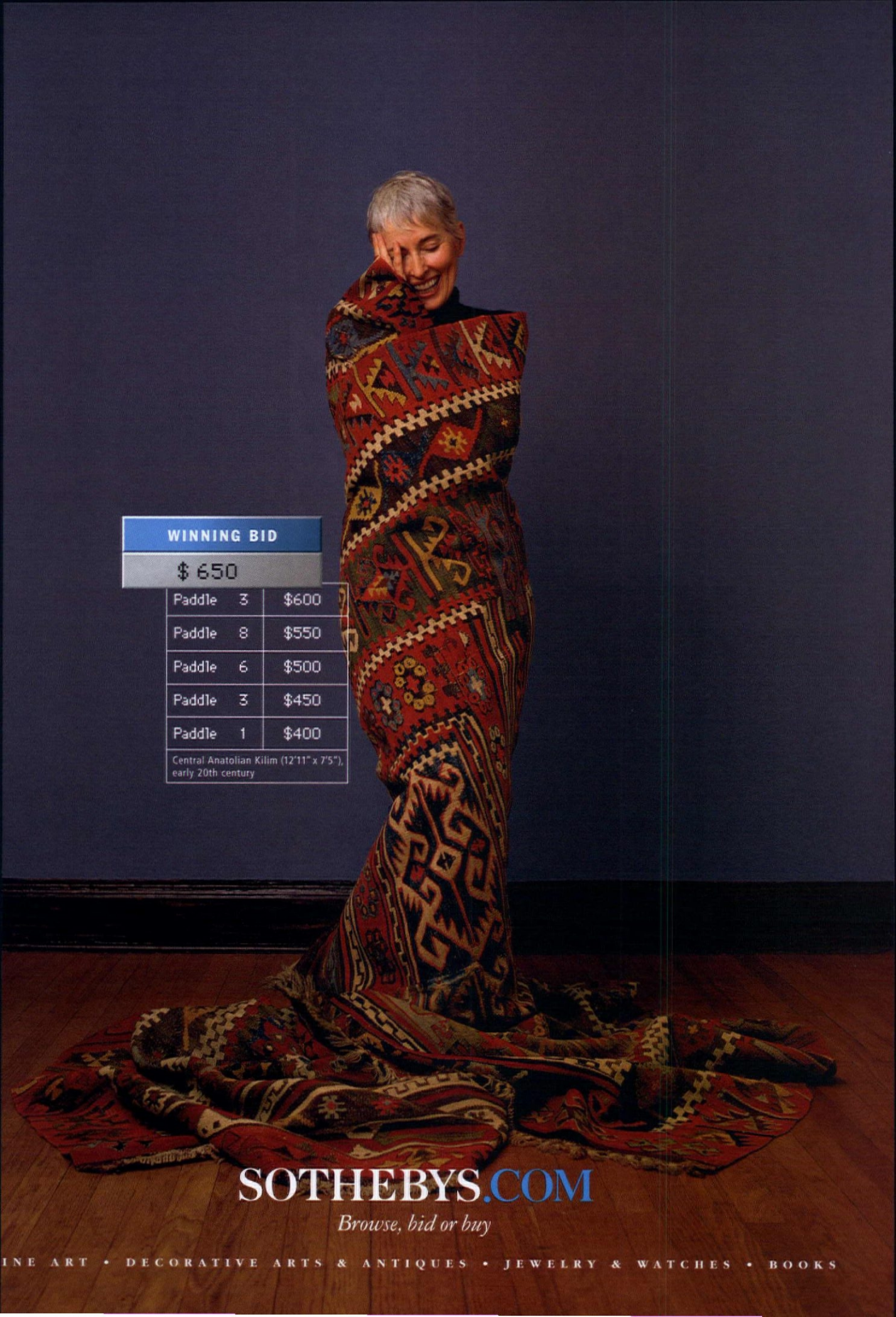
## Nell Newman

You can't argue with these genes. Not only is Nell Newman the daughter of Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward, but she has also inherited their love of good food and their sense of environmental responsibility. Since her "shocking realization" at age 11 that the pesticide DDT was causing the near extinction of her favorite bird (the peregrine falcon), Newman has educated herself and her father about the importance of organic growing practices. "I had a good start," she says. "We grew up eating and learning to cook from whatever was growing around. Both of my parents are excellent cooks. I especially remember Mom's homegrown applesauce."

Following in the footsteps of her father's successful food business, Newman's Own Inc. (which has raised more than $100 million for charity), Nell and her business partner, Peter Meehan, founded an organic branch of the company, Newman's Own Organics, in 1993. "People thought that organic food had to taste bad," says Nell, who lives in northern California. "We're changing their minds." Focusing on snack foods, the company started with pretzels made from organically grown wheat, and later added tortilla chips, cookies, chocolate bars, and even Fig Newmans bars. (Paul Newman was able to charm Nabisco into letting his daughter's company piggyback on the Fig Newtons name.) As with her father's business, all of the after-tax profits are given to charities. Nell asks her employees and business associates to nominate worthy causes.

Lately, she has been worried about the threats that she feels biotechnology poses to her business. "There's been no public discussion, no labeling requirements, nothing," she says of an industry that is estimated to affect about a quarter of the nation's cropland. She is concerned that genetically modified pollen from neighboring factory farms could drift onto her organic source crops. "This threat is more insidious than pesticides," says Nell. "That's DNA they're messing with."

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## green giant
# John Mackey

In the generally mellow realm of natural foods, John Mackey has a competitiveness that has taken the industry by surprise. Mackey presides over Whole Foods Market, the country's largest chain of natural food stores. It sells healthy and organic products to an estimated five million customers, who shop in the chain's hundred-plus stores.

From its humble, hippie-ish origins in Austin, Texas, in 1980, Whole Foods's rapid growth has astonished even the mainstream grocery business. Mackey has acquired such regional chains as New England's Bread & Circus and the mid-Atlantic's Fresh Fields, and has expanded into E-commerce with its Web site, www.wholepeople.com. Many new shops are planned, including a branch that will be one of New York City's largest grocery stores.

It is this ambitious drive that has enabled Whole Foods to move beyond their traditional consumer base and attract a wider, well-heeled clientele. "The reason is not that we've compromised our ideals," Mackey says. "We just try to make beautiful environments for people to shop in."

**Whole Foods, www.wholepeople.com**

**PIONEERS IN THE FIELD** **Kent and Diane Whealy, founders of Seed Savers Exchange, are interested in heirloom plants, including 700 types of 19th-century apple trees in their orchard.** **MARKET SHARE** **Whole Foods CEO John Mackey, below, at his store in Boulder, CO, says that customers will pay more for organic food, due to environmental concerns.**

## seed historians
# Kent and Diane Whealy

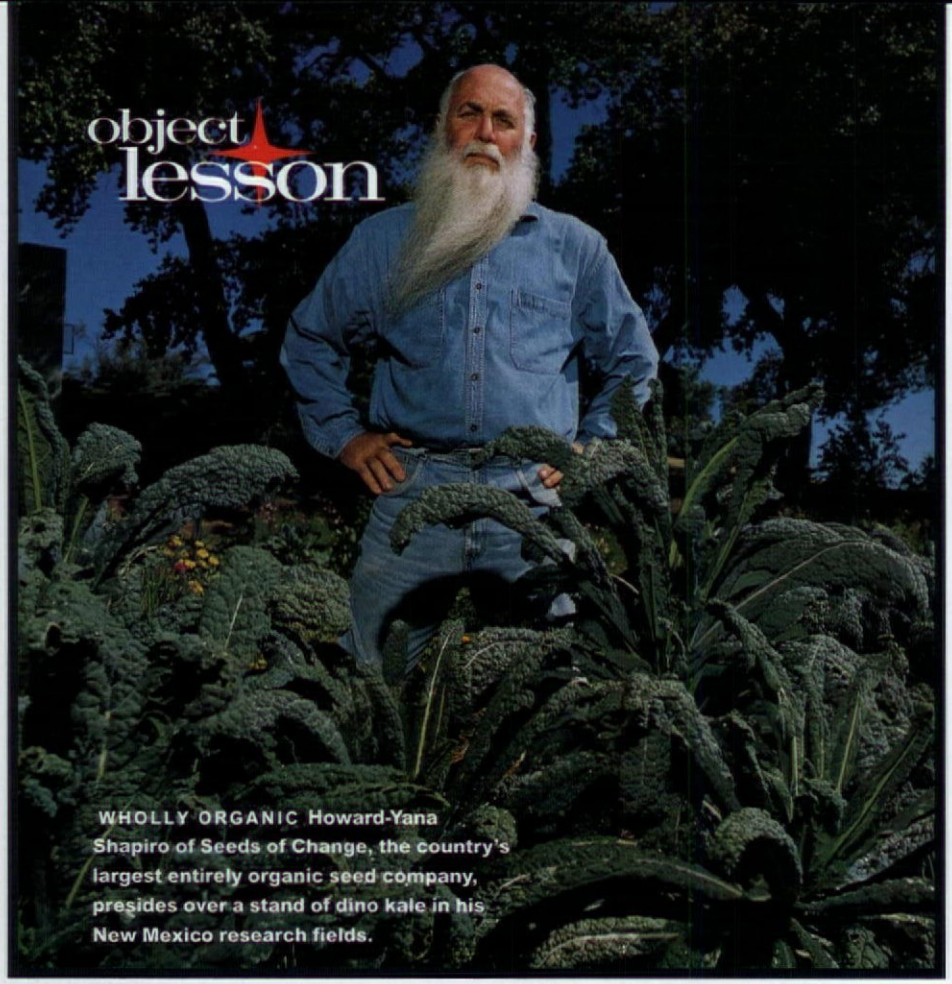
Talk to any seed aficionado, and you'll find that all roads lead back to 1975, the year Kent and Diane Whealy founded Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, Iowa. Over the following decades, this nonprofit group has become a worldwide network of 8,000 amateur and professional gardeners. For a small fee, members can buy or trade more than 12,000 heirloom fruits and vegetables, most of which don't exist in ordinary seed catalogs. Functioning as historians of this agricultural legacy, the Whealys have also opened their home and display garden, Heritage Farm, to the public to teach seed-saving techniques.

The Whealys are disturbed by new developments in biotechnology, such as the "terminator gene," which causes seed to self-destruct in its second generation. Another concern is a patent filed in 1997 by Monsanto for seed that won't germinate unless exposed to a special chemical. (Monsanto says it is not actively pursuing research on the patent.) "These technologies," Kent says, "are invented to prevent seed saving, a rich heritage that has existed for thousands of years."

**Seed Savers Exchange catalog, Heritage Farm, Decorah, IA; 319-382-5990**




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WHOLLY ORGANIC Howard-Yana Shapiro of Seeds of Change, the country's largest entirely organic seed company, presides over a stand of dino kale in his New Mexico research fields.

**field research**

# Howard-Yana Shapiro

With his flowing white beard and formidable gaze, Howard-Yana Shapiro is as intense in his appearance as he is in conversation. Theoretical discussion comes easily to this hard-core agriculturalist, who got interested in such topics as heirloom seeds and sustainable agriculture in the '60s while working as a Ford Foundation fellow in the rural South. Researching seed strains descended from those brought over from Africa by slaves, he realized that people have successfully preserved seed for thousands of years. The discovery has inspired him ever since.

These days, as the vice president of agriculture for Seeds of Change, Shapiro is responsible for the company's seed and food products at his home/research farm/seed cleaning facility, Rancho La Paz, in northern New Mexico. Since joining the company in 1991, he has made sure that its network of small farmers adheres to the standards set by Seeds of Change, the only company in the country whose entire seed line consists of organic, open-pollinated seed.

Seeds of Change was founded in 1989 by a group of people dedicated to the latest research in organics and sustainable growing systems. They built a business based on the large seed collection of Alan Kapuler, who remains the company's director of research. Since then, Seeds of Change has expanded, and now grows seeds of many flowers and edible plants, including amaranth, quinoa, peppers, and native southwestern varieties of corn. Recently, it added a line of organic food products such as rice, grains, pasta sauces, and soup mixes.

Shapiro is a busy man. One minute he is in Mexico learning ancient growing techniques from Oaxacan farmers, and the next he is scouting new seed sources in Scandinavia. Meanwhile, he recently published a book, *Gardening for the Future of the Earth* (Bantam).

When he isn't traveling, Shapiro spends his days inspecting his company's seed cleaning operation or checking up on the waist-high brassicas that aren't supposed to thrive in this high, dry climate above the Rio Grande. "It's difficult growing all your own stuff," he says, in a rare moment of calm. "In agriculture there's never a break."

**Seeds of Change, Santa Fe, NM**
**800-957-3337; www.seedsofchange.com**

## Seed Terms

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISM (GMO)

**A living thing, such as a fruit or vegetable seed, whose genetics have been altered for a desired benefit. A famous example is a variety of tomato whose genes were spliced with those of a winter flounder fish in order to make the fruit more frost resistant. Today 38 percent of the corn and 57 percent of the soybeans grown in the United States are GMOs. Critics worry about the possibility of introduced allergens and antibiotic resistance from these interspecies mixes, but the FDA says that GMO products are safe to eat. (However, the agency does not test specific introductions.)**

HYBRIDIZED SEED

**A crossing of two different varieties, usually of the same species, that results in offspring with clonelike similarities. Attributes such as taste and color are often lost in favor of other benefits, such as the ability to stay fresh on supermarket shelves.**

OPEN-POLLINATED SEED

**Free or random pollination between plants of the same variety through pollen spread by natural means, such as wind or insects. Unlike the uniform results of a hybrid, these plants will often show a natural variation in leaf, color, or shape.**

HEIRLOOM VARIETY

**A nonhybridized or open-pollinated seed that has been passed down for generations. When seed is saved from season to season, its valued properties, including taste and color, are largely preserved.**

ORGANIC

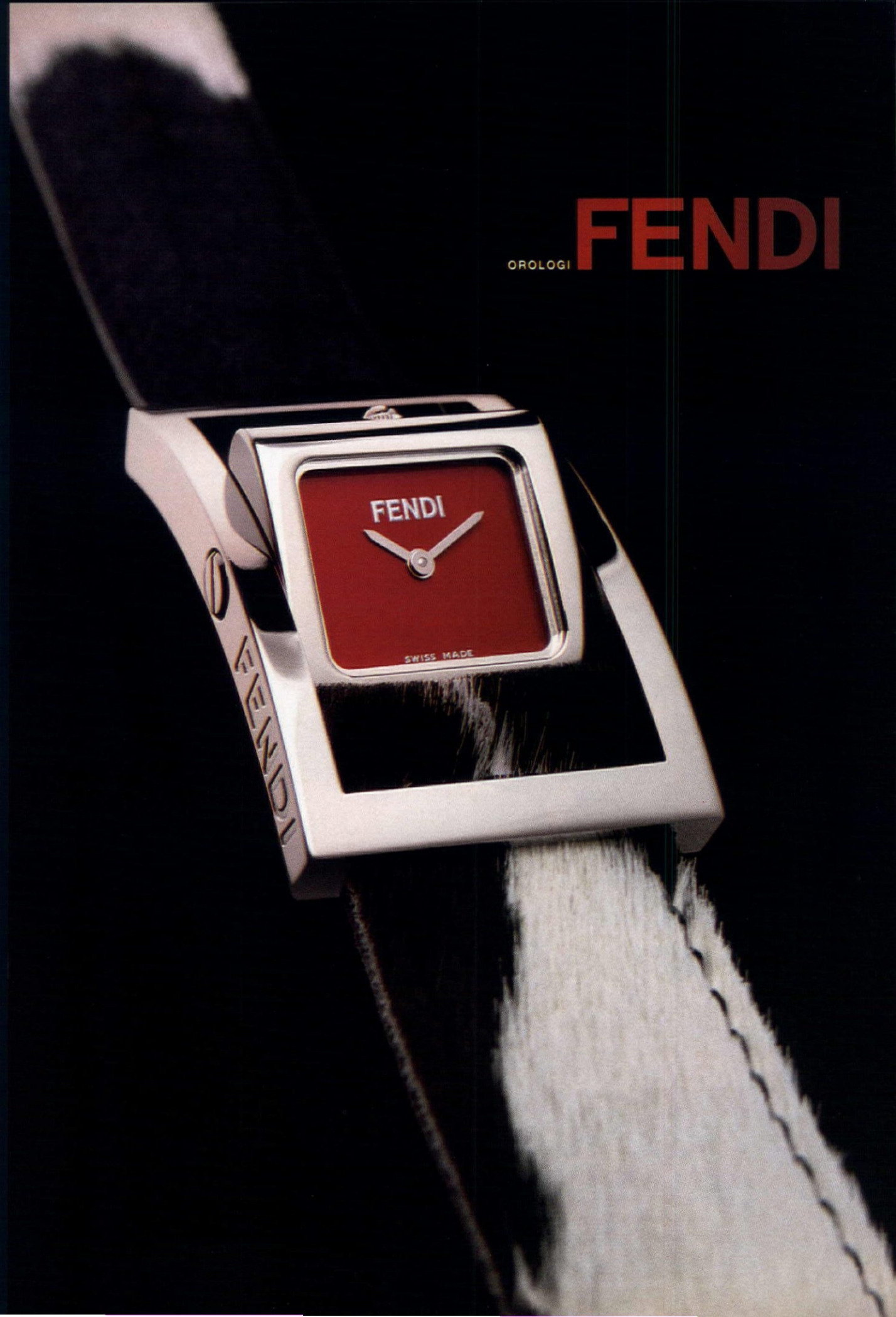
**There is no governmental standard definition for this term yet, but organic methods generally mean that no inorganic fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides were used by the grower.**

ISOLATION GARDENING

**The practice of keeping open-pollinated varieties distant from nearby plants that, because of their compatible genes, might interbreed. For example, if your 'Aunt Ruby's German Green' tomato comes out red, it has probably been cross-fertilized by insects or airborne pollen.**

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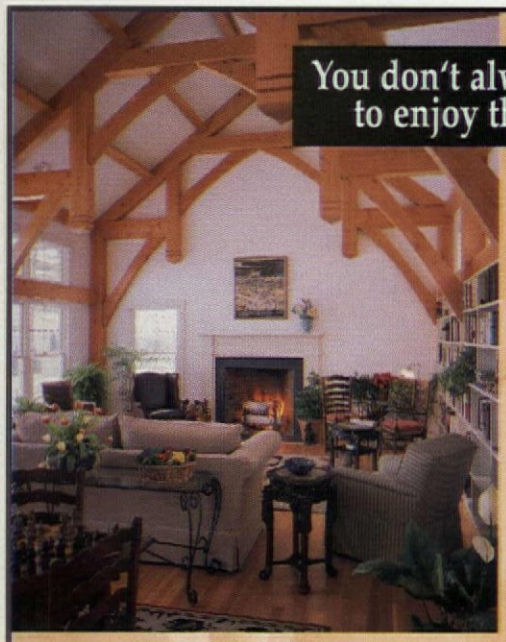

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object lesson



CORN ROW "An ear of corn belongs in the public domain and not under a patent," says vegetable gardener Amy Goldman. Sources, see back of book.

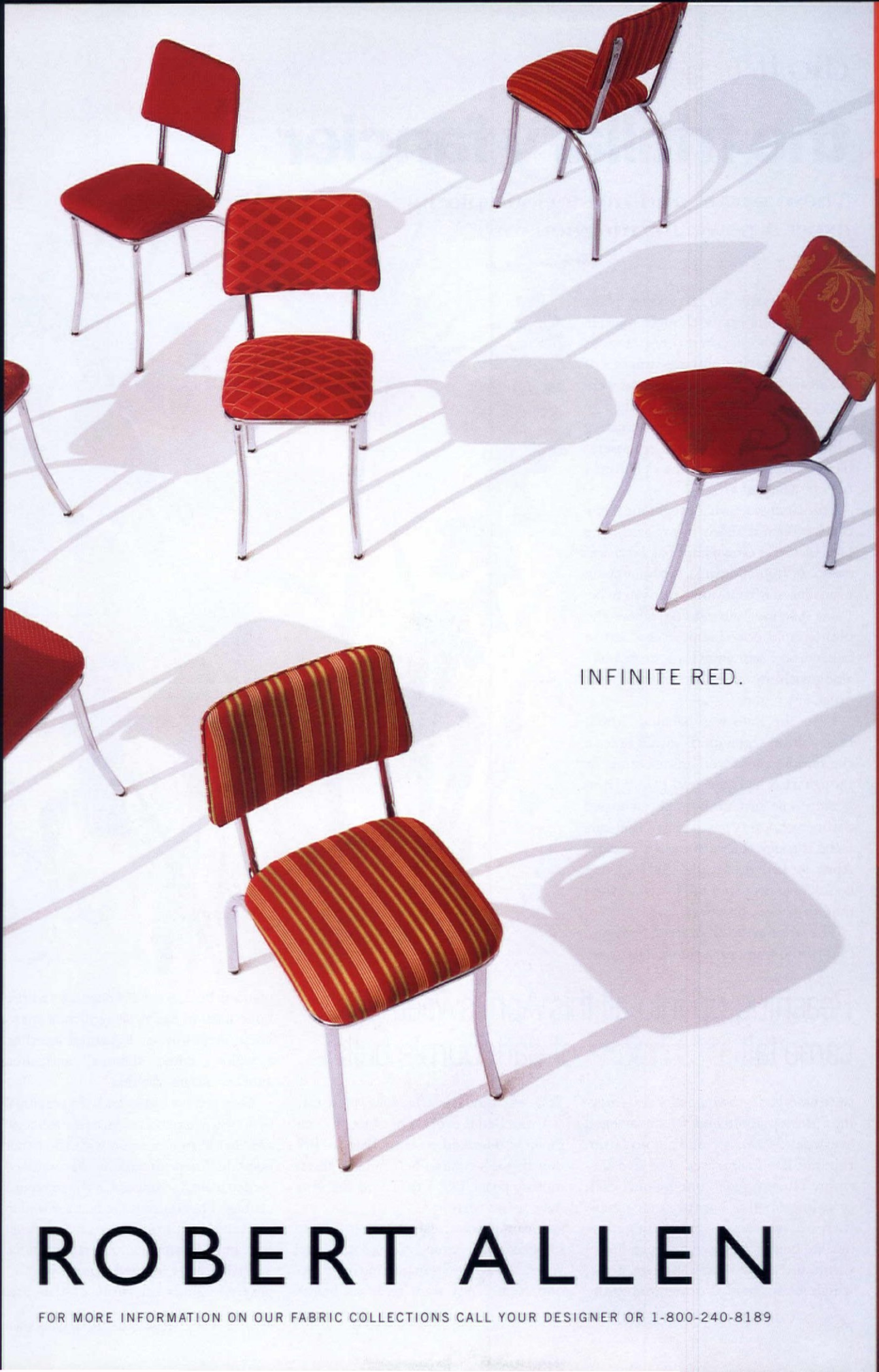
**passionate collector**

## Amy Goldman

I'm a late bloomer," says Amy Goldman of her advocacy of heirloom vegetables. "I came at it a decade ago through cooking and years of exhibiting vegetables at county fairs." This country gentlewoman, a 20-year resident of New York's Hudson Valley, felt she could sit back on her laurels after having won enough blue ribbons for a lifetime. But after reading about heirlooms in a Rosalind Creasy cookbook, *Cooking from the Garden*, she became passionate about the color, flavor, and diversity of these historic varieties. By last summer, Goldman was growing more than 250 heirloom types of corn, tomatoes, peppers, and, her speciality, the *Cucurbitaceae* family, including melons, pumpkins, and winter squashes, on her 200-acre property.

These vegetables thrive in two plots—an acre in total—which are located a half-mile apart. One of these plots functions as an isolation garden. In this fenced area, a seed's purity is ensured by its being kept far enough away from its kin in her larger garden down the road. This way, no cross-breeding can occur. "A half-mile is the general distance pollen-bearing bees will fly," Goldman says. (In a smaller garden, preventing varieties from crossing consists of more labor-intensive techniques, such as bagging or caging plants to deter pollinators.)

Worries about genetic engineering have reinforced Goldman's commitment to heirlooms. She shares rare seeds such as 'Galeux d'Eysines,' a pale orange winter squash with a distinctive ridged skin texture, through the Seed Savers list, and makes grants to like-minded organizations through her family's foundation. "Millions of acres of our country's crops are now genetically engineered," says Goldman, who is working on a memoir of her vegetable-growing. "We really need to slow down."




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# the fritillary fancier

## These exotic and mysterious plants exert a powerful magnetism




I USED TO DISDAIN plant fanciers. I thought people who devoted themselves to growing obscure varieties of sedums, say, or gentians were more akin to stamp collectors than to gardeners. Gardening is about creating a living place, I would insist, not assembling a museum. But that was before I became a fancier myself.

Fritillaries were what caught me. How can I explain it? Early in my gardening life I planted a crown imperial, *Fritillaria imperialis* 'Rubra Maxima,' without much of an idea of what it would turn out to be. I saw it in my bulb catalog, where the photograph looked almost too odd to believe. So I sent away for a single bulb, along with my snowdrop and narcissus order, just to see.

Even the bulb was peculiar: heavy, bone white, segmented, with a hole in the middle and a wild-animal stink, as though a fox had gone by. I planted it in a deep hole in October. The whorled coronet of pointy green leaves that surfaced through the warming soil of early April looked promising. But nothing could have prepared me for what then unfolded, week by week.

The whorl rose into a green fountain. Out of the fountain a thick, dark, bare stem emerged, growing taller and carrying a green pointed bud, which fattened every day. When it could get no fatter, the bud itself separated into five sections. These opened one by one, each revealing a bell of burnt-orange petals, with yellow stamens protruding clapperlike below. A crown of green leaves surmounted the whole strange plant, which stood, by this time (around the first of May), nearly four feet tall.

Reaching up into all this April sweetness came tall spires of dark purple bells

I watched it every day. Once, I knelt down and looked up from below. Hidden in each orange bell hung a shimmering pearl, like a tear. Did the king have secret sorrows?

It came back the next spring. Crown imperials will often return for several years, sometimes even putting out a second stem. They want rich soil in the planting hole, good drainage, and a little bone meal in early spring if they are to keep on flowering. I planted another, a yellow 'Lutea Maxima,' and then another 'Rubra Maxima.'

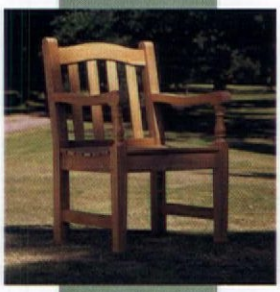
They grow at either end of a perennial bed; crown imperials seem to me too regal and exotic to naturalize with the other bulbs. In Europe they are an old-fashioned garden plant, introduced in the sixteenth century. They do, amazingly, grow wild in certain regions, from Turkey, east through Iran and Afghanistan, to northern India.

Fritillaries, I learned, appear in temperate regions on three continents:

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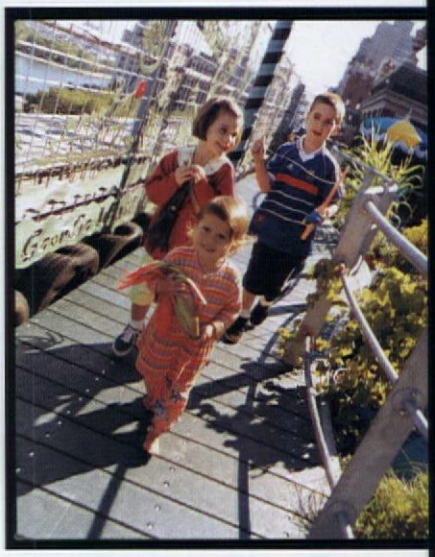
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**TIME-OUT** Therapeutic play tables include one, left, with movable sand containers and a sound sculpture that envelops Delaney. Young friends, below, parade on a "dock" that allows people in wheelchairs a great view. Sarah Keizer built the fence, bottom, which depicts Manhattan's bridge



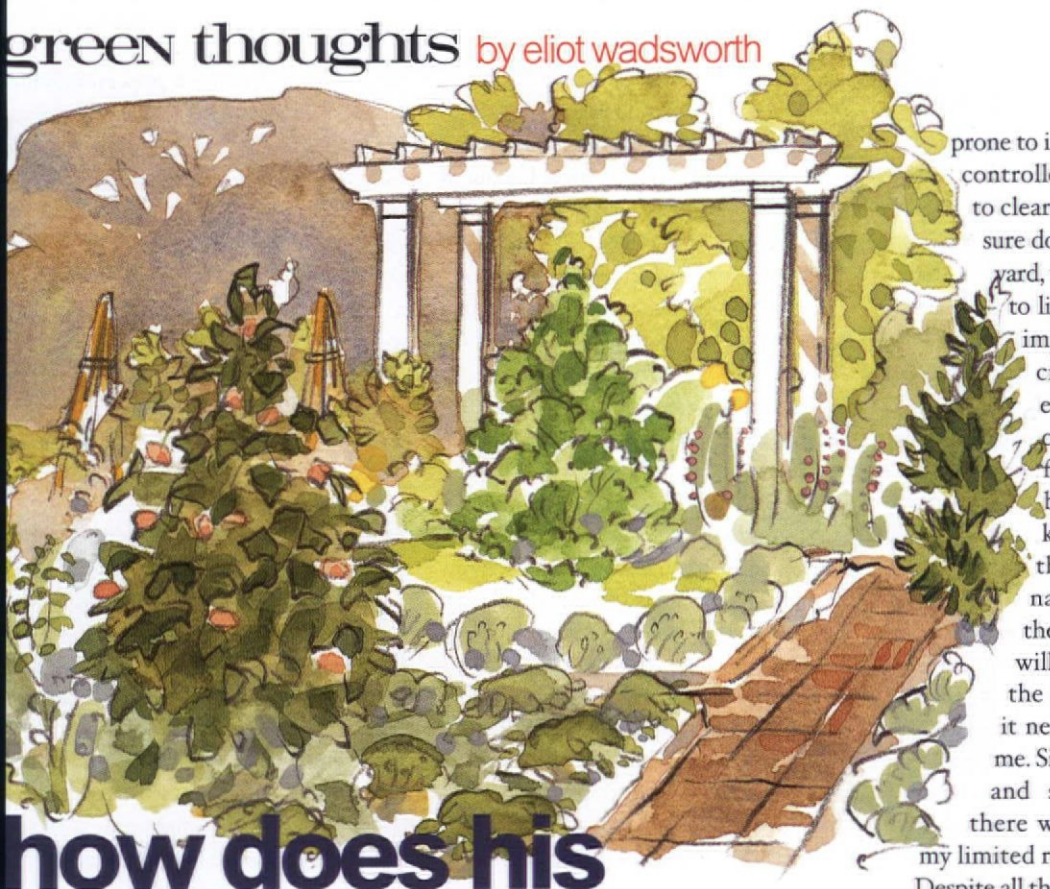
# outdoor living

## Topher Delaney designs a Manhattan healing garden that is a children's sanctuary

IT'S HARD TO believe that the Jonathan Parker Abramson Safe Harbor is a product of loss: the dynamic rooftop garden at Manhattan's Beth Israel Medical Center so clearly celebrates life. It is exactly what Dr. Fred Epstein, codirector of the Hyman-Newman Institute for Neurology and Neurosurgery, believes his patients need. "When the brain is focused on something other than the illness at hand, the body can heal more quickly," he says.

Donors Patricia and Alan B. Abramson wanted "to create something positive" after their four-year-old son succumbed to a brain tumor. They found San Francisco landscape architect and artist Topher Delaney, a cancer survivor who made her first healing garden for the Marin Cancer Institute in 1989. She transformed Beth Israel's unused terrace overlooking the East River into a sanctuary, fusing spirituality and skill. "It's not as whimsical as it looks," Delaney says. Plant material was limited, so she created a sense of abundance in a rubber floor aswirl with sea creatures and by using the Japanese technique *shakkei*, which she calls "the subtle union of distant aspects of nature with one's own garden," to make the space seem bigger. "We're working that river," she says. "We're reaching out into the distance and pulling in. It makes you feel part of a larger world." Looking through the galvanized steel fence, whose images of city bridges suggest transition, you feel an astounding sense of expansion and movement. Just what the doctor ordered.





# how does his garden grow?

## The owner of White Flower Farm describes planning and planting his home garden

I AM MAKING a new garden, and it's a big commitment. No, I don't mean the labor or expense, both of which are nominal, compared with what you and I are used to expending for a suit, a sofa, or a summer vacation. The commitment is mental and emotional, because a garden comprises all of our dreams, aesthetic aspirations, and, maybe, just maybe, a few personal needs that can be fulfilled with success but will be hideously reversed by a public failure. I have heard second marriages described as the triumph of hope over experience, but a new garden should be the reverse, drawing on hard-earned experience to create success in the current undertaking. In my case, both the expectations and the experience are elevated, because I have been, for several decades, a commercial nurseryman, and should be able to spin a truly magical garden out of my head and into the ground at a moment's notice.

The truth is a little more complicated. To begin with, I have done too much gardening to be content with a conventional garden. I am committed, by both background and inclination, to overreach, which means a bigger, more complicated, more maintenance-intensive, and riskier (from a design sense) project than makes sense. Second, I am not, in fact, a first-class plantsman. Over these many, many years, I have had the luxury of saying grace over literally thousands of varieties of plants whose day-to-day care has fallen primarily to others. Third, I am not willing, for all the usual reasons, to employ in my personal garden the kinds of agricultural chemicals that must be part of any large-scale commercial operation. At the nursery, we are extremely cautious and conservative in the use of pesticides, having come a huge distance from the heavy-handed practices of the past. But the fact remains that large concentrations of plants, especially similar species, are prone to infestations that must be controlled if our paychecks are to clear the bank. But that pressure does not exist in my backyard, which means that I have to live with some degree of imperfection, whether the crops are ornamental or edible. I hardly need point out that there are no flaws in the garden I have been dreaming, but I know that they will be there on the ground. Finally, of course, there is the reality that this garden will be at my home, not at the nursery, and everything it needs will be provided by me. Since I have a job, a family, and some other interests, there will be competition for my limited resources.

Despite all these uncertainties, I managed to work out a new physical layout for a space that previously housed a very shaggy perennial border and a half-hearted vegetable garden. My plan called for a combination of edible and ornamental crops in the same space, with the primary goal to make the entire garden handsome throughout the season, even as we were consuming portions of it. The space was rectangular, with a deep perennial border against the granite south wall of the house on one side, an established border of dwarf rhododendrons and laurels backed by a board fence on the other. I chose to enhance the site by digging out the old vegetable beds and installing a formal parterre of eight rectangular beds laid out in four pairs. At one end is the door to the kitchen (which has broad windows that give onto this space). At the other, I built a handsome trellis of unfinished mahogany to provide a place of shady repose. The area is in full sun from dawn until midafternoon (ideal to minimize summer heat), and the stone of the house soaks up warmth, creating a pronounced microclimate that is sometimes frost-free until Christmas.

It's a handsome enclosure, certainly larger than I need, but not preposterously so. It has ready access to storage, water, and the driveway, so most tasks are easily

managed. Once the new beds were in place, I double-dug them with well-rotted compost, removed large stones, raked them out, and waited for rain. After they received a good soaking, I repeated the job, all the while reminding myself that the process is as good for me as it is for the garden.

The plan had been forming in my head for years, but it proved, upon reflection, to be composed of a great many small ideas with no central organizing principle, which meant I was really starting from scratch. To repeat, I wanted both edibles and ornamentals throughout the entire season and some free time for other pursuits. The latter requirement implies no fussy or exotic varieties, a strong preference for longer-blooming genera, and avoidance of those varieties that are notorious hosts for pests. I wanted flowers for the house, flowers in the garden, and plenty of those vegetables that are truly superior when picked fresh (salad greens, basil, tomatoes, beans, strawberries). Finally, aesthetic issues aside, I wanted to plant in rows, to make weeding and mulching easy. In short, lots of tactics, but no strategy.

I started with the perennial border at the north and planted a restful mix of blues, yellows, and pinks that would give me many weeks of midsummer bloom. There are only a few varieties, with large blocks of each repeated for symmetry. An ancient and venerable blue wisteria on the wall above provides both color and fragrance in May, and the perennials take over in June. On the opposite side, the shrub border, with lots of pink epimedium at its feet, looks quite splendid for about four weeks from mid-May, and then offers a very restful presence, above which pink and white clematis can bloom on the fence. So much for the exterior.

The individual beds became, as I thought of it, each a separate landscape. There are a total of eight, which I chose to treat as four pairs, making mirror images on either side of the brick path. In this highly geometric space, to be populated primarily by low-growing salad greens, I felt that two-dimensional plans would be deadly dull, so I centered each bed with a rustic five-foot pyramid-shape trellis, then bracketed the trellises eac with a pair of white standard roses o four-foot stems. These vertical accent were intended to create a more lush an complex feel, bringing both foliage an color up from the ground by mixin tomatoes, peppers, sweet peas, beans, an morning glories on the trellises. It looke pretty on paper, and left me with what felt was my biggest challenge: making th individual rows interesting and attractiv while they were being consumed.

I STARTED WITH the notion tha the beds nearest to the kitche should hold the vegetables use most frequently throughout the seasor For me, that means various salad greens basil, chives, beans, and *fraises des bo* (which fruit all summer if kept irrigated) It's pretty hard to inject visual interes with this list, so I simply varied the row by color, with red romaines next to sof green mantilla and dark green basil. T get some variety in texture and shade, also used rows of carrots with feather tops, and leeks, whose blue-green stem

There's also a video player so you can pause at the good scenes.



will anchor the bed until late summer.

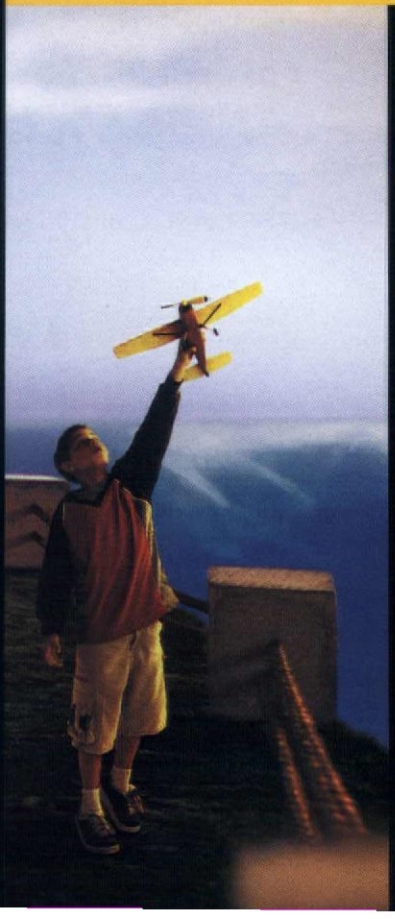
Because I pick *fraises* every morning, four beds were edged with a total of 120 plants. Finally, I needed small quantities of tarragon, dill, chives, sorrel, thyme, and a few other aromatic herbs for cooking, and these were to be tucked into odd corners. This plan required me to overrule common sense in the interest of visual integrity, because the reality is that large sowings of edible crops produce more waste than nutrition. A family of four may eat 6 to 8 heads of lettuce a week, but won't eat 20. Still, I wanted complete rows of the major elements, and that's what I planted.

Without a lot of foresight, but with the infinite enthusiasm of spring, this approach quickly filled four beds, the two pairs closest to the kitchen. By the time I was done, it was clear that I would be very long on greens in July and very short in August, so I suspended planting for the next two beds, leaving them open except for central trellises and attendant roses, plus their edging of strawberries. Those beds will be planted in mid-July with another round of greens, plus a lovely purple-headed broccoli that just turned up in trials at the nursery. I expect this bed to look a little bleak during June, I but can't think of a good alternative.

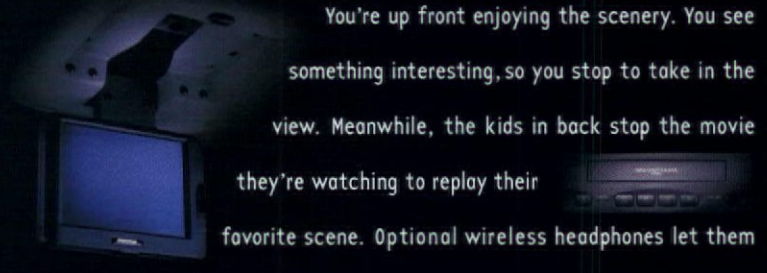
With three beds of vegetables committed, my scheme needed a final movement, and I was ready to reach for a big effect. The last two beds are at the far end of the garden from the kitchen and lead up to the new trellis, which will eventually be engulfed in grapevines to provide deep shade and a quiet shelter for some teak furniture. That implies a dark background for whatever blooms in the adjoining beds. To be visible from the kitchen, the plants need to be both tall and colorful, and a little fragrance would also be welcome for the visitors to this someday bower. I couldn't find an answer in gardens I had seen, either in person or in books, so I simply combined my favorite plants in a way that I had never seen before (and may never see again).

This pièce de résistance is a combination of Oriental lilies in pinks, creams, and whites, with blue cornflowers, larkspurs, and forget-me-nots. They are planted in alternating rows, six rows to a bed, with the notion that the lanky and aristocratic lilies in pastel shades will have rustic handmaidens in azure tones, making a striking contrast of color and form. By including two full rows of the exquisitely fragrant lily *L. speciosum* var. *rubrum*, we guaranteed a rich and pervasive perfume that will engulf the entire garden on a warm evening; and we're certain to pick a few stems of each variety for the house if the combination is successful—perhaps many of one or two if it is not. Expectations are running high.

As of mid-June, this garden is fully planted, except for the late-season beds, and the prognosis is good. Despite dry weather since early May, the gardens are lush and lovely (and delicious), and the newly planted perennials are establishing themselves quite happily. The established plantings have already provided their agreeable and familiar performances, and we're waiting with more enthusiasm than I can possibly describe. Truth is, I think I'll enjoy the mistakes more than the successes, because they require that I do more designing next winter, and I've come to believe that the anticipation may be more exciting than the reality.

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# SUTHERLAND



*Jake Stripe Collection*

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS

### A new fabic line from Sutherland

**If you look closely at a leaf, you will see that it's not a single shade of green, but a mixture of shades that create a glow, an iridescence. This iridescence is the inspiration for *Perennials*, a stunning collection of fabrics designed especially for the outdoors by David and Ann Sutherland and John Hutton. "We created *Perennials* hoping to invigorate and expand the outdoor fabrics market," says Ann Sutherland. Perennials is a versatile collection of fabrics in dimensional stripes, solids, and subtle graphics that adapt to variable seasons. The designs are sophisticated and true to the spirit of the Sutherland Teak Collection in their natural, organic colors, and textures. They'll go from garden to poolside to waterfront, and are rugged enough to withstand sun or rain. Best of all, *Perennials* fabrics are equally elegant when used indoors.**

### QUEST FOR PERFECTION

Some 25 years ago, friends David Sutherland, John Hutton, and Bill Goldsmith embarked on their separate careers in furniture design and marketing. Over the years, they kept in touch with each other, as well as with the evolution of the design marketplace. And they found they shared a common aesthetic and an appreciation for well-made things.

So when, in 1991 David Sutherland had an idea for a new furniture line, he knew exactly who he wanted on his team. "My observation at the time was that the vast majority of outdoor furniture had been designed by architects," says Sutherland. "To these architects, the importance of outdoor furniture was how it visually added to the landscape. It was not about comfort. I went to my friend John Hutton because his designs are both comfortable and beautiful." And he called on Bill Goldsmith for his sense of design, eye for detail, and high standards of craftsmanship.

Hutton and Goldsmith came back with dozens of exciting designs in teak—all of which Sutherland was determined to produce. Thus began a three-year odyssey that took Sutherland and Hutton to the ends of the earth in search of the materials and craftsmanship they demanded.

### A LABOR OF LOVE

Finding enough first-quality teak to produce this extraordinary collection was the first hurdle. Sutherland and Hutton bumped over rutted roads in sweltering heat throughout Indonesia and it was here that Sutherland first realized that "this venture would be a labor of love." Teak is harvested under the close scrutiny of the government to preserve this most precious resource, and it is difficult to acquire in quantities sufficient for an entire line of furniture. But Sutherland and Hutton persisted. "Teak is virtually impervious to the elements because of its density, natural oils, and silicates." Nothing else would do. The next challenge came in having the pieces made in Indonesia, a largely Muslim country with strict taboos about artistic expression. In order to realize the arm posts of John Hutton's Matisse Arm Chair (which features curvaceous nude female figures), they had to find an artist who carved in the Balinese tradition. "The breasts on our Matisse woman appeared at first like the bumper of a '59 Cadillac — poin enough to cause minor injury," recalls Sutherla

### THE END RESULT

Ultimately, Sutherland and Hutton succeeded only in communicating the nuances of Sutherlar unparalleled designs to a Balinese artisan, to professional interior designers, architec and homeowners all across the United Sta and Europe.

It took three years of development, finding best materials and craftsmen, scrutinizing prototy after prototype, and in 1994 the unveiling of Sutherland Teak Collection met with rave revie and instant demand across the United Stat "It was awesome... an overwhelming sense achievement... a great collaboration!"

## THE SUTHERLAND DESIGNERS:

- **DAVID SUTHERLAND** own **furniture showrooms in Dalla Houston, and Los Angel representing manufacturers li Dakota Jackson, Donghia, ar J. Robert Scott.**
- **JOHN HUTTON designer of th John Hutton Collection.**
- **BILL GOLDSMITH create tabletop designs for Porcelaine Site Corot in Limoges, and Deru of Italy.**
- **ANN SUTHERLAND textile design**



*The Olympus Chair designed by John Hutton*

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# RJones



## SIMPLE LUXURY

One of RJones' handsome promotional brochures quotes Plato: "Beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity." And one look at a piece of beautifully designed RJones furniture will persuade you that Plato's words have been taken to heart. RJones furniture is designed to delight the eyes and comfort the body. Graceful lines and perfect proportions create forms that are pure and pleasing. But it's the subtle details and the unexpected finishing touches that make these pieces something special.

Rob Jones studied interior design, but left school to start the company that now bears his name. RJones grew out of a small upholstery business owned by his father, "I always had a passion for furniture and fabrics, growing up around the upholstery business," says Jones. That passion has served him well. In a mere 20 years, the business has expanded exponentially throughout the country, and the name RJones has become synonymous with simple luxury. In 1985, Jones was joined by business partner Bryan Campbell.

"The furniture collection evolved out of a reinterpretation of classic style; the original point of view was to clean up traditional," Jones explains. "When we started back in 1980, transitional furniture was really becoming popular. And so we began taking traditional styles and cleaning up the lines, giving them beautifully simple tailored details."

## THE RJONES LOOK

Jones gradually began to introduce more unique designs, becoming an industry design leader, "Our earlier designs were really reinterpretations of classic forms to fill particular needs and niches. In the last five or six years, we've tried to push the envelope a little bit more in terms of design. We've brought in a couple of new designers and we're working on creating more of an identity for our product. Overall, we want our product line to have a cohesiveness to it, to create an "RJones look."

## COMPLETING THE PRODUCT

As part of that effort, four years ago RJones introduced its own fabric line, which gives the furniture a unified look that is immediately recognizable. "The fabrics allow us to build a complete product. In the design of our fabrics, we try to achieve the same kind of balance as in our furniture. We have some really traditional fabric textures, and we have some things that are really kind of out on the edge," says Jones. The first textile collection was based around a grouping of warm neutrals and soft textures. The following year, RJones followed up with more formal and tailored looks — a silk mohair in seven colors and a beautiful Swiss cotton damask in a contemporary pattern. The current collection, called *Expeditions*, pulls from a lot of different ecologies. There's a pattern based on kilim, an African tapestry weave, and one that is reminiscent of the Australian Outback in its dry, arid hand.

And because Jones believes that luxury and comfort go hand in hand, all RJones furniture is exquisitely made. Hardwood frames, hand–tied coil springs, sumptuous fabrics and leathers and down-filled cushions — are all crafted with an uncompromising attention to detail.

## COMFORT MEETS STYLE

### The RJones Philosoph

**"I guess you could sum up m philosophy by saying that want to create somethin that's both beautiful an comfortable," says Jone "Our pieces are created in range of shapes and sizes, b whether they're large or sma they have a lot of presenc in the room. Any piece ca stand on its own. But togethe they create a wonderf synergy."**



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# opening out

## A Provence kitchen window frames a life rich in food and friends

In 1984, when we bought our farmhouse in Provence, my postage-stamp-sized kitchen window faced north, and as I cooked or did the dishes, I looked out over a gravel parking lot. I would stand at the stained kitchen sink each morning as the postman came up the hill to hand me the day's news through a pathetic slit of light from this world of sunshine. That was the only convenient thing about the window. (Actually, in the old days, there would have been no window at all, since in Provence, the north-facing wall of the farm was always windowless, as protection against the elements, most of all the chilling north wind known as *le mistral*.)

Many mornings, I left the kitchen and walked to the adjacent room. I guess you could have called it a family room, but then it was just a spare bedroom in our rambling farmhouse, made up of rooms that were once used to house goats or rabbits, to dry figs or linden blossoms, or just to store stuff. This room, the one we called *la salle blanche* because it was all white, had the window of my dreams. The top of my head just brushed the top of its frame, and though I had to stoop, the view was majestic. The window faced due west, and each evening as the sun set in a ball of reddish-orange fire, I would be drawn to it, watching as the day said good-bye over Mount Theos. I was determined that someday I would peel carrots at that window.

**Each evening, I would be drawn to the window, watching as the day said good-bye**

We saved our centimes and built the kitchen of our dreams. Now I sit writing at a vast ochre-tiled kitchen counter, looking out that very window at the forest and the pine-covered Theos in the distance, a sea of green growth beneath blue skies. We arched the window a bit, so that now I do not have to stoop to watch nature's passing show. And instead of the old stained sink, I have a massive white marble one, measuring the exact width of my 46-inch kitchen window.

The first thing I do when I get up each morning is turn on our trusty 20-year-old espresso machine. The second thing I do is open the window and hook it with the brass marine latches that my husband installed to stop it from banging in the wind. The sky is pink right now, reflecting the sun coming up over the end of the house. Some days it is late morning before I set foot outside, yet my window makes me feel as though I am outdoors all day long. It has come to symbolize all that is right about the world—about my kitchen, about our Provençal farmhouse, and about life in general. If I ever bought another house, the kitchen would face due west, preferably with a view of a mountain or the sea.

It's funny how one can create an element in a home without thinking of the consequences. And sometimes the consequences turn out to be better than you might have dreamed. I can make a long list of the things that the kitchen window has added to our lives. To get to the front door of our farmhouse, you must pass by the window, so the postman, the pool man, the gardener, the FedEx man, our friends, or strangers coming up the hill can't sneak up on us. Since I spend almost every waking moment in my kitchen, either cooking or cleaning or writing, I have a front-row seat on the farm's activity. I am the gatekeeper.

Right now the ochre-tiled windowsill is filled with plump basil plants, there not only for their fragrance,



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CATALOG AVAILABLE

beauty, and flavor but also to keep away flies. (I can't swear that the old Provençal custom really works, but I can tell you that we rarely have flies.) I have to add here that the window, like all the doors and windows in our farmhouse, is screenless. Although you will occasionally see a screened window or door here and there in Provence, they are not common. This practice is much to the amazement of most of our American visitors. You can see better out of screenless windows.

To go with the sunset view, we planted a small garden, a sunset terrace filled with plants that keep their leaves in winter. Now all year long I look out upon a sea of green: lavender and rosemary, olives and bay leaf. We also planted a butterfly bush. From spring until late autumn, its brilliant purple flowers attract white and purple and yellow butterflies that dance around on the terrace. One day the Three Tenors were singing loud and clear from the speakers in the corners of my kitchen, and I would swear that the butterflies were dancing to the music. It made me cry with happiness.

EVERY TUESDAY for centuries, there has been a market in our village. It's not just any old market, but rather a full-blown village fair, where merchants sell everything from vegetables and farm machinery to panty hose and the season's fashions. The farm wife who lived here until the 1960s used to walk down the steep hill to town, taking with her homemade goat cheese and live rabbits to sell. Sometimes I stand at my window on Tuesday mornings and think about all the farm wives who also may have looked at the view with anticipation of another successful market day.

The same farm wife who carted her rabbits and cheese down the hill also did her laundry in a small pool that sat in the center of what is now our terrace. I wonder if she ever stood and stared at Theos as I do, grateful for the kind of clean open space that seems to rinse your mind and open it to new thoughts. There is a cat—a very fat red cat—that has visited us for years, always at dinnertime. If it is winter and the window is closed, she lets me know she is there by hurling her body against the panes. She has been coming at least since we built the kitchen in 1991, and she has tasted just about everything I have tested since—recipes for *Trattoria; Simply French;* my latest Provence book; and an upcoming book on Paris. She has devoured panna cotta and beef daube, lapped up bits of rabbit with lemon confit, and never turns up her nose at the likes of leftover tarte Tatin. I am sure she has even tasted truffles and sniffed at foie gras.

One Christmas we were a group of eight, and it began to snow, flakes the size of goose-down feathers at 9 A.M. We were all busy in the kitchen, roasting a stuffed turkey on the spit in the kitchen fireplace. We marveled at the snow as it began to smother Theos in a blanket of white. Everyone went outside and stood in front of the window for a group photo. Once again the window served as the prettiest frame I have ever seen.

**PATRICIA WELLS** *is the author of seven books, including the forthcoming* The Paris Cookbook.

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**FIREPOWER** **Classes by Chan Patterson, second from right, get added heat from Viking ovens.**

# all fired up

## At Viking's cooking schools, the main course is served up on state-of-the-art ranges

LIKE S.U.V. OWNERS who still get stuck in the snow, there are people who own professional-style stoves who can barely boil water. Viking, the ten-year-old appliance manufacturer, doesn't want its $5,000 ranges sitting idle, so it has opened cooking schools in Memphis and Nashville, where you can learn from the pros in kitchens outfitted with the company's status ovens, dishwashers, trash compactors, and grills. Curious to try cooking in a trophy kitchen, I headed south.

**8:45** Armed with my paring knife, boning knife, and chef's knife, which I transported through airport security wrapped in newspapers in my luggage, I arrive at the Memphis Viking Culinary Arts Center for my one-day, $125 basic techniques class. Not everybody has followed director Colleen DePete's instructions. My eight classmates show up empty-handed and are offered their pick of the school's Global and Wüsthof-Trident knives.

**9:00** Our instructor, Chan Patterson, gives us a short lecture on the dangers of cross-contamination and goes over the day's menu. I'm daunted by the terms—tomato *concassée,* pepper coulis, crème chantilly. The appliances gleam alluringly in the morning sun. This must be what it feels like to take driver's ed in a Porsche.

**9:30** Matched up with partners, we assume our positions around the massive marble island. Our first undertaking is a basic vinaigrette. I don't know which is more disconcerting: the fact that the recipe calls for "salad oil" instead of extra-virgin olive oil, or that the instructions yield a quart of dressing. My partner, Dorothy, and I compromise and use half vegetable, half olive oil. Not bad—but we're still left with two weeks' worth of vinaigrette. I soon learn that large portions are one of the hallmarks of Viking cuisine.

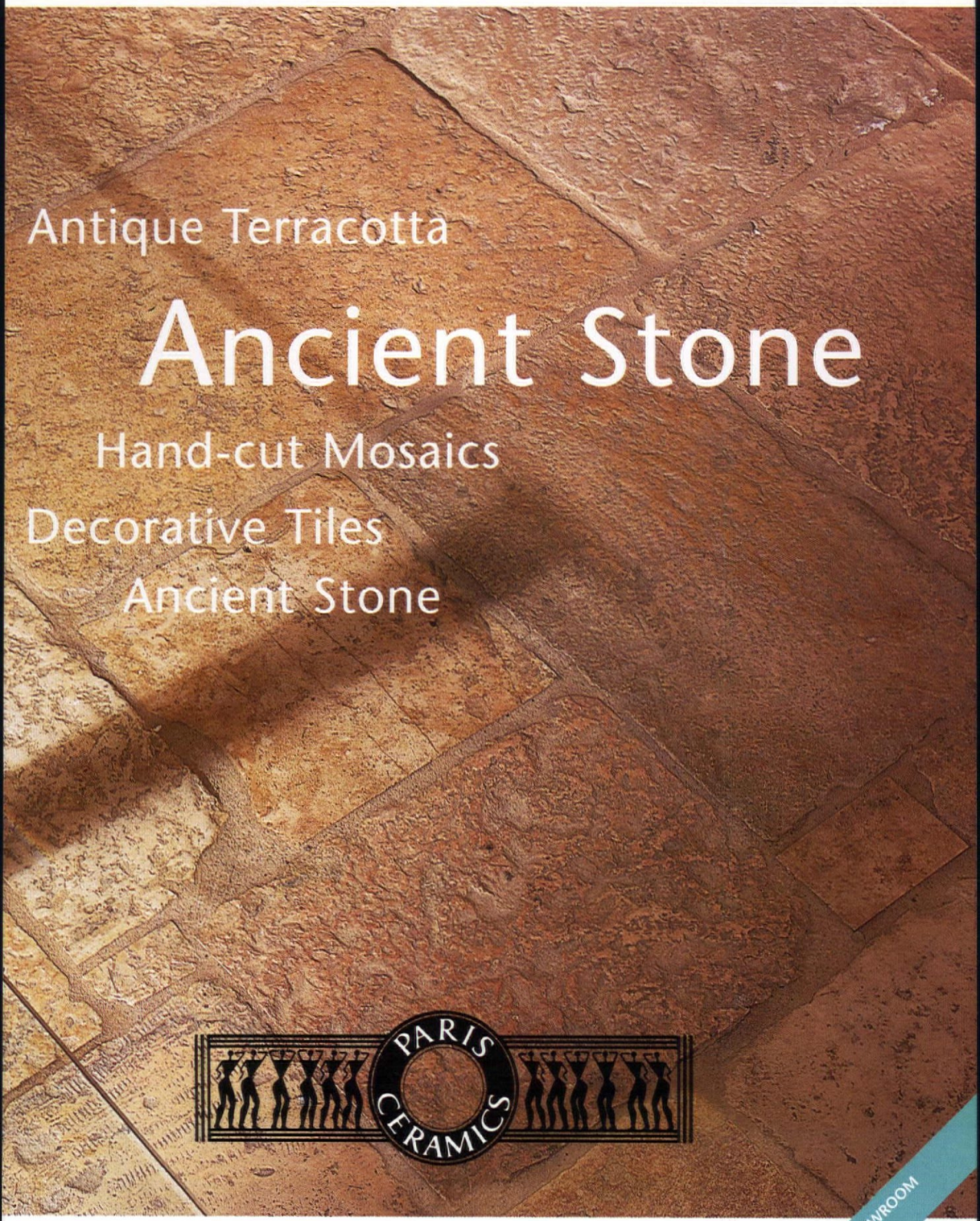
**10:00** It's time to start the chilled pepper coulis, and since Dorothy is a stovetop-roasting veteran, I get to blacken the peppers over a burner. Is it me, or does the flame burn particularly clear and strong? Chan shows us how to remove charred skins by dropping the peppers into plastic bags and rubbing. Among this Food Network crowd, I'm the only one who has never seen this done before.

**10:45** On a Viking range, a pot of water comes to a boil in three minutes. I am so amazed, I almost miss the tomato-seeding demonstration.

**11:00** A culinary Cinderella, I soon discover that old habits die hard. Inured to the irregular heat of my 20-year-old stove, I compulsively adjust the flame under the coulis every few minutes. Colleen saves me from myself by explaining that the simmer setting on the range is not only steady, but accurate. The flame sits just under the edge of the burner cap, producing low and constant indirect heat. Wow.

**11:30** We turn our attention to the main course: chicken sauté with onions, garlic, and basil. With middling success—and lots of help from Chan—I learn how to fabricate a chicken (a.k.a. taking the breast off the bone). A momentary

## The joy of cooking school is that you never run out of ingredients, clean measuring cups, or mixing bowls




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setback occurs when we burn the butter for our sauté. Dorothy kindly clarifies another batch. (The joy of cooking school is that you never run out of ingredients, clean measuring cups, or mixing bowls.)

**12:00** Before we break to eat our first course—the chilled coulis, cheese, and crackers—I remove the cooked chicken breast to a plate and set it on the warming rack built into the ventilation hood. Even Dorothy, who already owns a Viking range, thinks this is pretty neat.

**12:45** Refreshed by the coulis (apparently delicious, if you like roasted peppers, which I don't), we set to work on making strawberry shortcake. One of Chan's goals is to help us develop cooking techniques like measuring, boning, roasting, and learning ratios, so that we can confidently approach any dish. To that end, I suspect, some of the recipes are unnecessarily complicated. The biscuits call for butter in ounces, but shortening in tablespoons.



**SCHOOL SUPPLIES** **The retail shop at the Viking Culinary Arts Center has everything a cooking-school graduate needs.**

Milk is also apportioned by the ounce, not by the cup. Equipped with an electronic scale, beakers, measuring spoons, and Pyrex cups, Dorothy and I set to work. I haven't done this much measuring since high school chemistry.

**1:30** Our final task is to prepare the shortcake filling. Chan suggests that we forego electric beaters for the authenticity of balloon whisks. In my house, the electric beater is the novelty, so I stick to cutting strawberries with an egg slicer and let Dorothy give hand-whipping a whirl.

**1:45** Starving and slightly bleary from standing all morning, we sit down to lunch. I am impressed—and certain that if I had one of these ranges, I could turn out gorgeous meals every night. I'm not alone. Colleen tells me that Viking dealers consider a class at the VCAC the ultimate closer: virtually every person who visits the school after coming into the showroom purchases a Viking product.

**2:30** Last stop is the retail shop, adjacent to the test kitchen and cooking theater. Stocked with a gleaming array of Hackman cookware, Mauviel copper pots, Riedel wineglasses, and scores of utensils, cookbooks, and bakeware, it distracts me from thinking about trying to convince my husband that we absolutely need a Viking range. Until then, a new cutting board, a stainless-steel whisk, suede potholders, and some wooden spoons from France will have to suffice.




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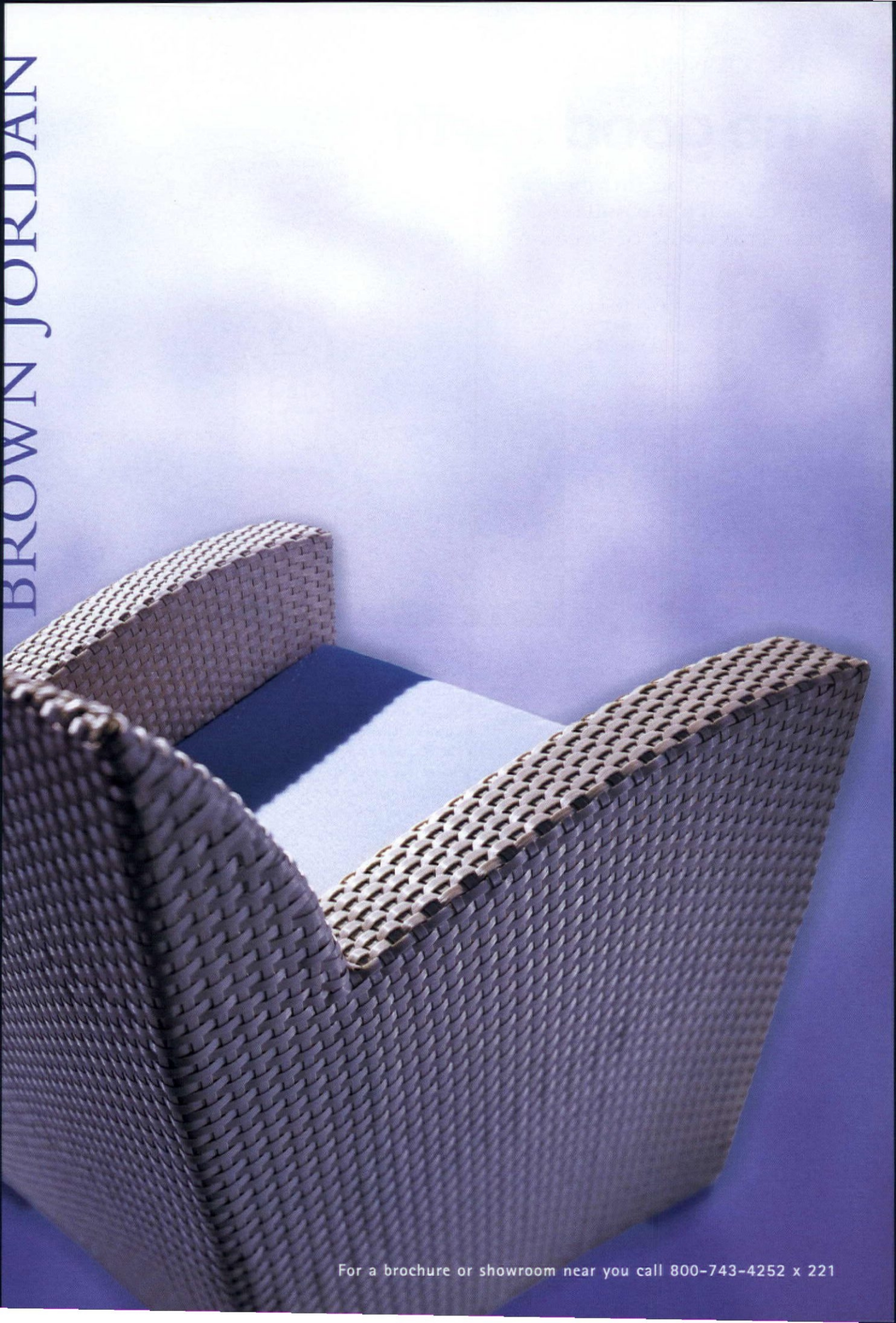
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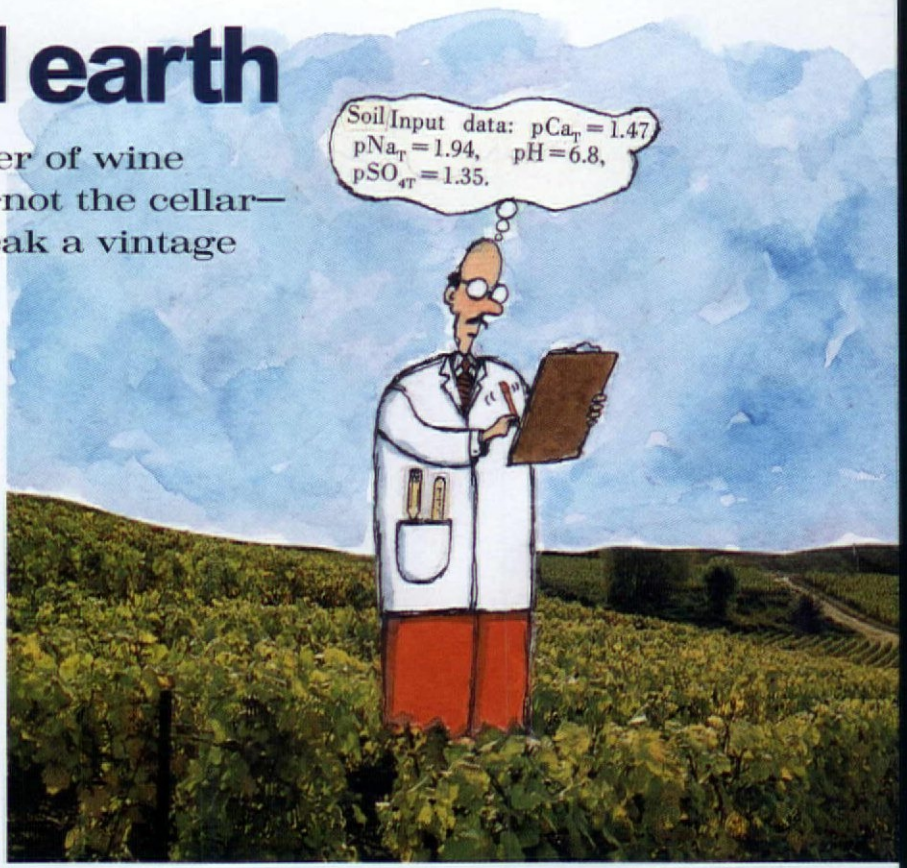
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# the good earth

## For a growing number of wine makers, it's the soil—not the cellar—that can make or break a vintage




DANIEL ROBERTS reckons that he has dug more than 12,000 holes in the course of his professional life. A pro-wrestler-sized guy in his fifties, Roberts looks like he could dig a pit with his bare hands, but he generally uses a backhoe for the first part of the job. Once the hole is deep enough, he likes to climb in and get his hands dirty. Roberts is in charge of soil management at Kendall-Jackson. Watching him crumbling, sniffing, and even tasting a clump of loam, you know that this is a labor of love. Around the Napa Valley, he's known as Dr. Dirt.

Roberts, who studied agronomy at the University of New Hampshire, says that his mother once told him he was so dirty, he ought to get a doctorate in it. He did, and the California wine industry is beginning to get down with him. "For years," he says, "California focused on what was above ground." Now Golden State wine makers are starting to suspect what the French have known for a long time—that dirt is important, and that the character of a wine is largely determined in the vineyard.

**Grapevines, like children, need discipline and boundaries**

Taking me on a tour of a hillside cabernet vineyard that will become a source for Jess Jackson's boutique Cardinale Estate cab, Roberts shows me three test pits that have successively richer and less rocky soil. He then points out that the vines adjacent to the lowest and least rocky hole are more vigorous and leafy. In fact, the lower part of the vineyard is too lush for his taste—"Rocks are good for cab," he says—which is why, when it's replanted, he will order a less vigorous rootstock for this part of the vineyard.

Roberts is part of an informal fraternity of California viticulturists who are shifting the focus of wine making from the cellar to the vineyard itself. Some small, dirt-conscious wineries, like Saintsbury in Carneros, which lack the awesome resources of Kendall-Jackson, avail themselves of the services of vine-wrangler-for-hire Martin Mochizuki of Walsh Vineyard Management, who carries his pruning shears holstered on his hip. Mochizuki, who was born in Fresno, came to viticulture by way of a degree in entomology from Berkeley, although, fortunately, no one seems to call him Dr. Bugs. (His face does light up like someone recognizing an old friend, though, when he points out a vine damaged by the nasty phylloxera louse.)

The boyish, taciturn Mochizuki supervises all aspects of viticulture for Saintsbury owners David Graves and Richard Ward, from soil testing to pruning. The two U.C. Davis grads have been producing very good Pinot Noir in Carneros for more than a decade, about half of that amount from purchased grapes. But their quest for a grand cru American Pinot Noir led them to start over, literally from the ground up. Seven years ago they found what they considered an ideal site in Carneros—the Brown Ranch, just a couple of miles from their winery. In conjunction with Mochizuki, they conducted extensive soil and drainage tests, and began the laborious process of marking out different "blocks" and choosing the rootstocks best suited to each.

A short Viticulture 101 interlude: Prior to the nineteenth century, grapevines were planted on their own roots, like most sensible members of the vegetable kingdom. Since the midcentury phylloxera epidemic, European varietal grapevines (Cab, Pinot, Chardonnay, et al.) are almost always grafted onto louse-resistant American rootstocks. Just to ridiculously complicate matters further, the vines grafted onto the rootstock are often cloned from a single mother plant. Winegrowers have many clones to choose

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from. Custom viticulture thus involves hundreds of possible combinations of clone and rootstock. The first two vintages of Saintsbury Brown Ranch Pinot Noir show that meticulous matchmaking of soil type to plant material can have a hugely beneficial impact on wine quality.

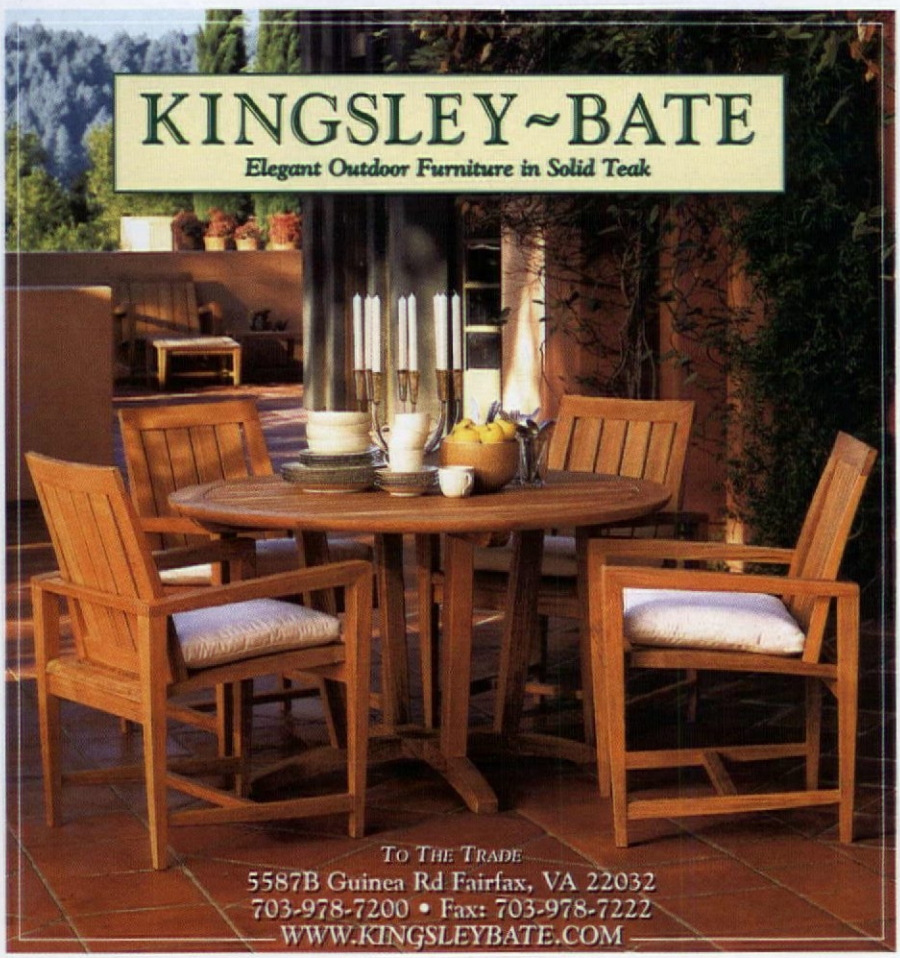
"To make a certain quality of wine, you have to grow your own grapes," insists John Wetlaufer, business partner and husband to wine goddess Helen Turley. "It's totally artificial to separate grape growing and wine making," he says. Over the years, while Turley became the most sought-after wine maker in California, Wetlaufer began to specialize in the agricultural side of the biz. A natural scholar who looks like he should be teaching at Berkeley, Wetlaufer became a self-taught viticulturist, reading everything he could find and visiting the best Pinot and Chardonnay vineyard sites in California and France. After years of consulting for operations like Pahlmeyer Winery, and of purchasing grapes (and fighting with growers) for their own Marcassin Chardonnay, Wetlaufer and Turley finally bought their dream site, a southeast-facing slope in western Sonoma.

"The first aspect of viticulture is site selection," Wetlaufer tells me as we walk the steep, rocky rows of the bleakly beautiful vineyard. The second aspect, development, involves dozens of backhoe pits. Like his pals at Saintsbury, Wetlaufer mapped out blocks and laboriously matched them with rootstocks and clones, mostly in the interest of lowering vigor (grape quality and quantity being inversely related). He spaced and positioned the rows to optimize the exposure to sunlight.

WHAT HAPPENS above ground is equally important. Grapevines, like children, need discipline and boundaries; the Marcassin vines are meticulously trained and pruned till they resemble green solar panels. Although Burgundy was once his model, Wetlaufer believes that standard Burgundian canopy management promotes vines that are basically too short and too dense to allow optimal ripening. "The goal," he says, "particularly with red grapes, is to get direct light on the fruit in the morning, but not the hotter afternoon sun." Every leaf in the vineyard is accounted for. "We're looking for fifteen to seventeen leaves per shoot, and that will ripen one or two bunches." Rampant greenery is discouraged. "The vine allocates carbohydrates between fruit and vegetation," he explains. Too much greenery robs the fruit of root-borne nutrients. Wetlaufer speaks of grape leaves as if they are at best a necessary evil.

Recently Wetlaufer and his pal Dr. Dirt have gotten into computer modeling of terrain and global satellite system technology. Wetlaufer tried to explain it to me on the long drive back down the Pacific Coast, but after four or five hours of Advanced Viticulture, my head was aching. Science is not my strong suit. Fortunately, once we returned to civilization, I got to taste Marcassin in the presence of the wine goddess herself. Moving from Turley's '98 Gauer Ranch Chardonnay, made with purchased grapes, to the '98 Chardonnay from her own vineyard was a revelation. The first was spectacular. The second, made by the same wine maker, employing the same cellar techniques, was even better, almost beyond superlatives.

"*That's* viticulture," said Turley, tipping her glass to her husband.




## THE OENO FILE

**'96 MARCASSIN VINEYARD PINOT NOIR** This shows the bass note, earthy component we associate with great burgundy, along with gorgeous ripe black fruit and hints of cola and cinnamon bark. Grand cru stuff. $75

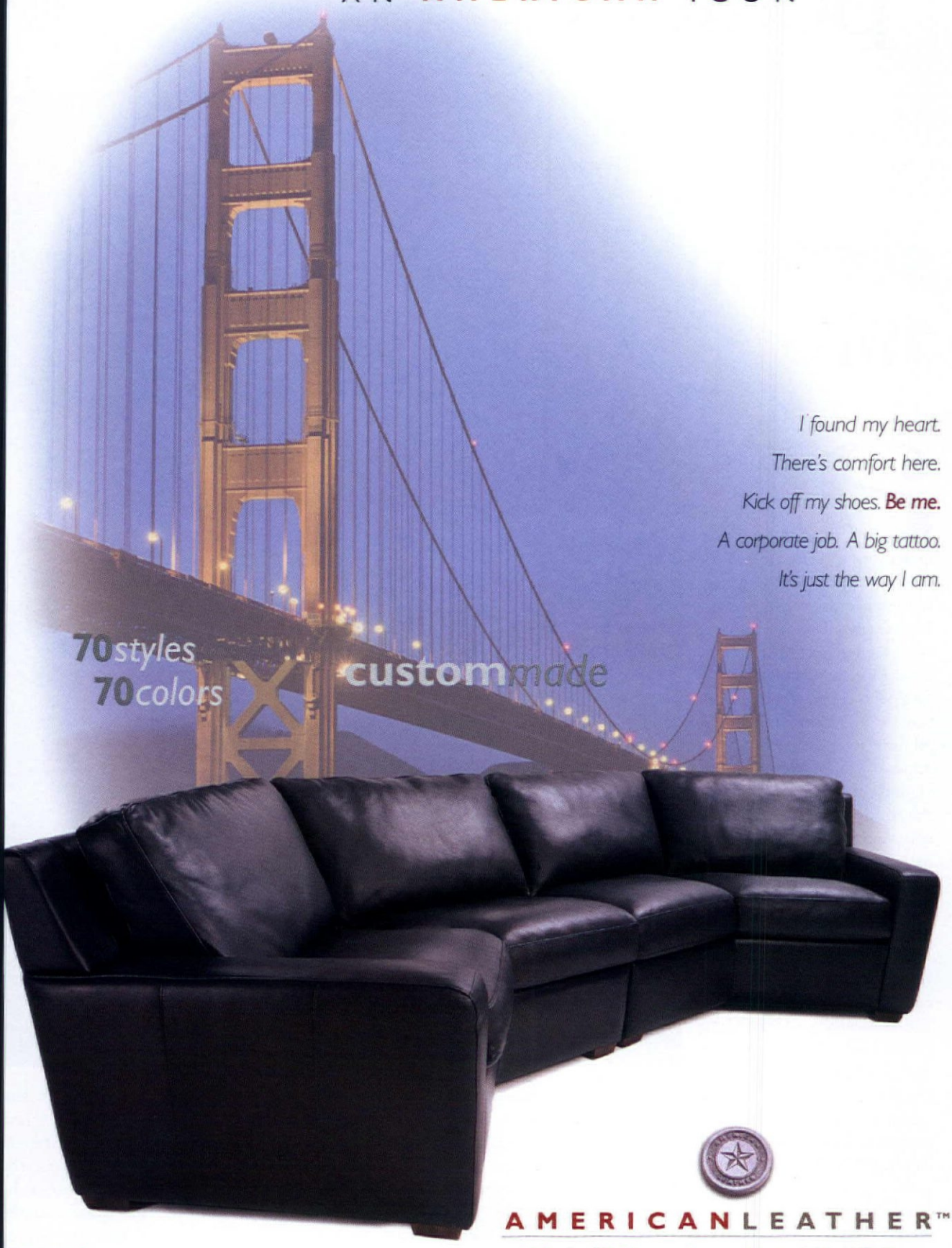
**'97 SAINTSBURY PINOT NOIR RESERVE** The cherries jump out of the glass and into your nose, a pleasant impression that is confirmed on the palate. A counterbalancing acidity prevents the fruit from cloying. Even better with roast chicken or beef. $46

**'97 SAINTSBURY BROWN RANCH PINOT NOIR** This is a brooding, serious Pinot Noir that might have come from Gevry Chambertin. The deep, smoked black cherry fruit is complemented by earthy bass notes. This should probably be cellared for a year or two. $80

**'97 SAINTSBURY CHARDONNAY CARNEROS UNFILTERED** Very pretty and refined, with honeysuckle on the nose and ripe, sweet pineapple fruit. An elegant style, blessedly light on the oak. $20

**'96 STONESTREET CHARDONNAY SONOMA COUNTY** Very concentrated, with just the right touch of vanilla from the oak. A nice balance of sharp lemon and rich honey. Serious juice from the Kendall-Jackson empire. $22

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# past perfect

by véronique vienne



## september 1970

A COUPLE OF chairs borrowed from the dining room and set under a tree create a delicious sense of impromptu elegance. In this photograph published in *House & Garden* in 1970, the concept is tempered to perfection. Landscape architect James Fanning, who designed the MoMA Sculpture Garden with Philip Johnson in 1953, dreamed up the unusual Connecticut garden vignette for Thomas B. Hess, the editor of *ARTnews,* and his wife, Audrey, a nature lover and native of New Orleans.

The leafy poolside gazebo was clearly conceived by someone with a modernist's eye. Though nature is the palette, the overall intention is one of geometry. The horizontal and vertical lines of the three ladder-back chairs serve as a matrix for the entire landscape. On the trunks of tall cherry trees, an arbor of weeping cherries has been grafted to form a flat pleached canopy. The pattern of the stone terrace suggests a grid, as does the long fence separating this secluded area from the pond and the bird sanctuary below. More than a garden, this is a backyard art installation, a subtle reference to the work of Land Artists, who were gaining popularity at the beginning of the 1970s.

For Fanning, Hess was the ideal client. One of the brightest art critics of the postwar generation, Hess was a champion of abstract expressionism and a friend of Willem de Kooning, Barnett Newman, and Alexander Liberman. He must have appreciated the inherent contradictions of this little in situ masterpiece, particularly the clash between the rustic and the contrived, the indoors and the outdoors, the figurative and the abstract—or, as he himself once put it, "those ambiguous, evanescent, ironic qualities of art which are, as Baudelaire first noted, the characteristics of modernity."




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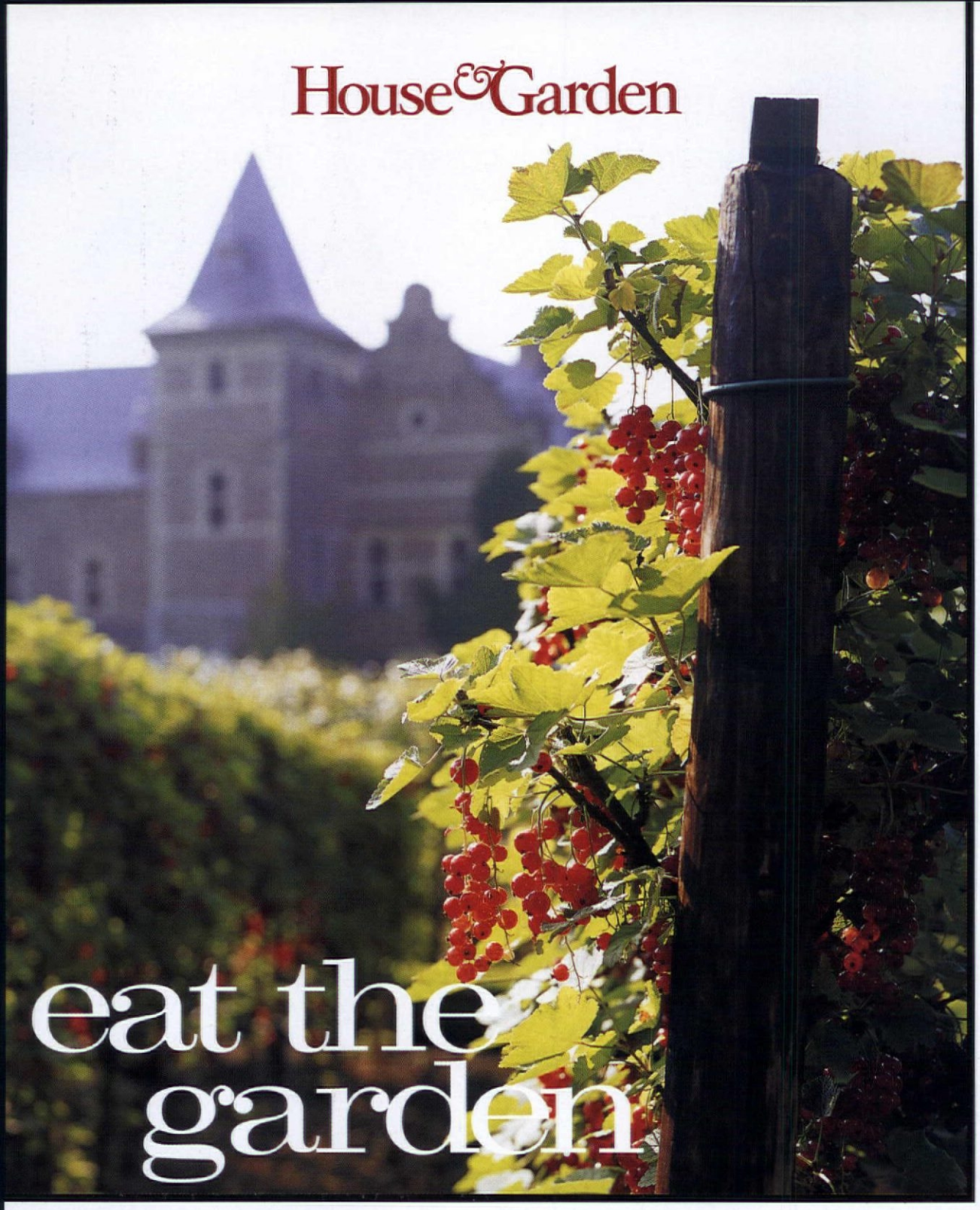
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# eat the garden

**first principle** The intangible world of cyberspace, where more and more of our life takes place, creates a desire for its opposite—a world of the senses: of smell, taste, and touch, as well as sight and sound. A beautifully landscaped garden with fruits, herbs, and vegetables is uniquely equipped to satisfy this desire and to remind us that our grounding in the earth obliges us to use it wisely.

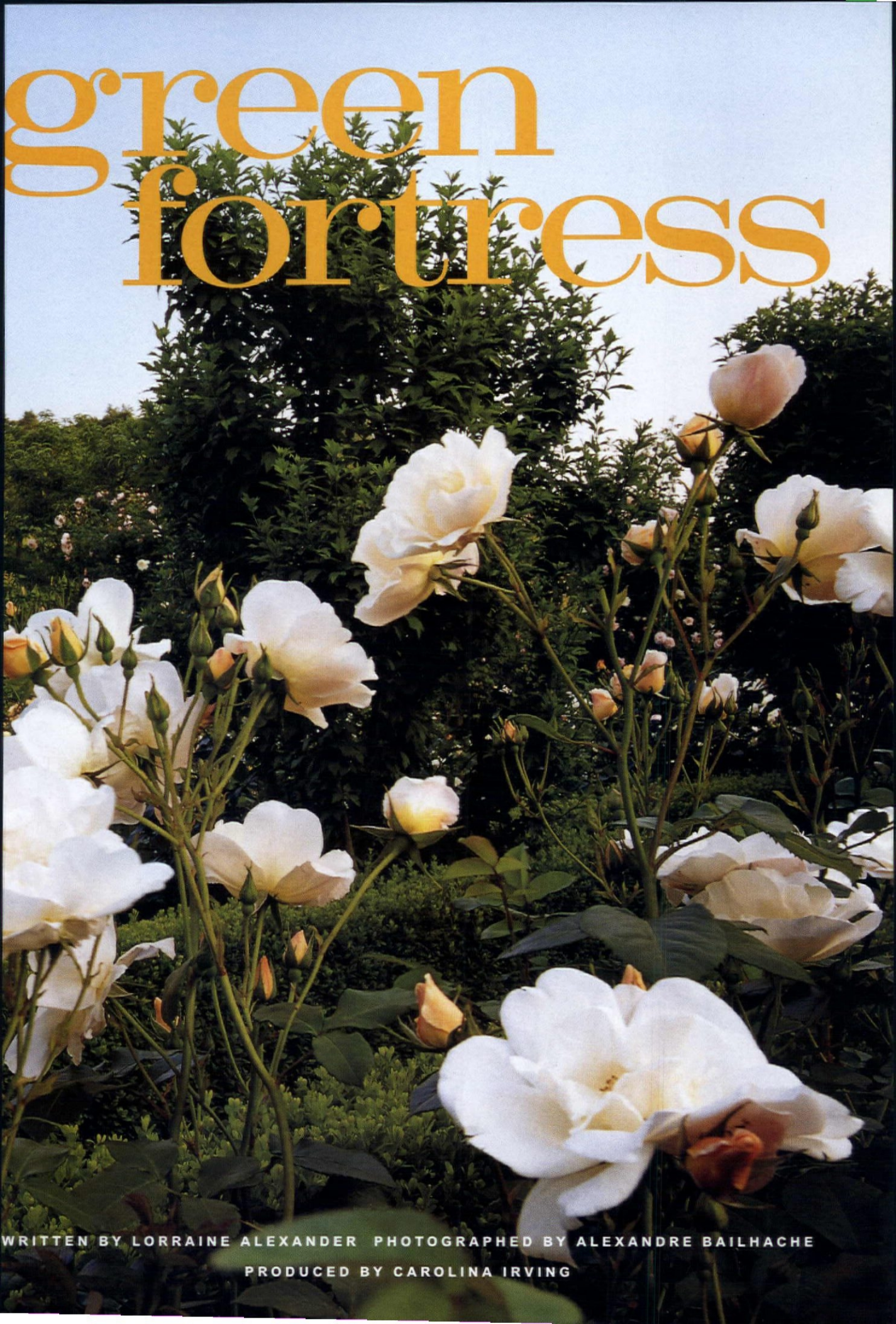
Edible landscaping adds to the range of colors and textures at no sacrifice to sophistication, as this Belgian garden by Jacques Wirtz shows.

Jacques Wirtz has surrounded a small Belgian castle with edible and ornamental gardens that flow into the landsca



**THE CASTLE IS THE BACKBONE** of the design for the garden: everything follows from its lines. The rose garden contains what Peter Wirtz describes as varieties that really perform: 'Lijnbaanroos,' a Dutch floribunda; the German 'Grüss an Aachen' rose; and hybrid teas 'Peaudouce' and 'Mme. A. Meilland.'

# green fortress



WRITTEN BY LORRAINE ALEXANDER PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDRE BAILHACHE

PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING


The sophisticated blending of geometry and undulation carrie
rows of vines, or into the adjacent rose garde




WE WERE STANDING under centenary cherry trees, looking down on a scene that might have been painted four centuries ago by Jan Brueghel, the "Velvet Brueghel," as he was called. Nearly the entire of Belgium's Mot Valley lay before us: slopes of orchard and vineyard; meadows of grazing Suffolk sheep; a pond and ornamental potager; flower gardens and hawthorn hedges; and, in the valley's deepest crevice, a doll-house of a Renaissance castle. Casual observers might assume that such a vision could only have evolved over ages of meticulous refinement. But ten years ago the natural-spring sources that feed the trickling Mot were clogged, the house was a shambles, and only the orchards, though long abandoned, suggested the valley's cornucopian potential.

That was what Angelique and Robert Noortman found on a November day in 1988. "It was dreary, really," Angelique remembered, "but we knew immediately that this was our house." And when the circa 1661 house was restored and decorated, there was the small matter of 40 acres of fertile loam, spread beguilingly beneath the village of Borgloon, to consider. That is where Jacques Wirtz came in.

Wirtz is arguably Europe's premier landscape architect, with projects that range from his redesign of the Carrousel gardens at the Tuileries in Paris, to the University of Antwerp campus, to countless residential commissions. With his two sons, Peter and Martin, Wirtz has configured his firm to encompass both design and contracting arms, so that quality control is a given.

How, exactly, did Wirtz begin such an enormous undertaking—the design and planting of an entire valley, after all—much less carry it through? "The [Noortman] property radiated a great potential charm," Peter, who studied at Cornell's landscape architecture program in the 1980s, told me. "There was the little castle, and from there on, the backbones were quickly suggested. It was the old lesson number

**THE RECTILINEAR LANDSCAPING plan inspired by the Renaissance castle called for squares for the potager, straight rows of hedges in front of the castle, and geometrical beds for the perennials in back, which function as outdoor rooms. Wirtz enlarged and reconfigured the original pond, behind which Suffolk sheep graze amid fruit trees. The Noortmans' 1,000 apple, cherry, pear, plum, quince, and peach trees amount to the largest collection of old-fruit specimens in Belgium. Because many of them were in poor condition, Wirtz began work on the garden by restoring the orchards and replacing some of the trees.**



THE POTAGER, a good example of the Wirtzes' sensitivity to the natural site, is designed on a slope, effectively stretching and softening the classic model. "We like a blending of curvilinear and organized corners," Peter says. Behind the vegetables and herbs, grapevines continue the movement up the hill.







**THE VIEW ACROSS THE POND and perennial gardens, above right, leads to a section of orchard and, at the crest of the hill, takes in several houses in Borgloon, a medieval site that is one of the oldest villages in Belgium (after nearby Tongeren). WATER LILIES, like the one above, thrive in the pond now, as do ducks, thanks to Wirtz's restoration of the area's ecology. A PEEK INTO THE ROSE garden, right, reveals fruit trees and blue-flowering hibiscus, which provide patches of shade and visual diversity. ANGELIQUE, LISA, AND MICHELLE NOORTMAN, above left, pick berries. Before beginning her family, Angelique was a commercial pilot.**

one that we learned in college: respect the spirit of the place."

The departure point was, however, the orchards: 1,000 apple, cherry, pear, plum, quince, and even peach trees, the largest collection of old-fruit specimens in Belgium, many of which urgently needed replacing.

Wirtz's solution, to follow a 15-year plan of gradual restoration, is more than halfway along; and in spring, this protected microclimate brings forth a mass of frothy blossoms. Once the orchard's future was resolved, the development of orderly garden spaces around the house began.

When I visited the Noortmans, I was struck by the progression of plantings fronting the house and gradually moving up the facing hill to the potager and vineyard. Wirtz, aware that there had once been a moat around the castle, had created a narrow canal flanked by pleached linden and by yew and hornbeam hedges.

The potager, or kitchen garden, containing herbs and vegetables for everyday cooking, as well as cutting flowers and berry fruits, is ornamental in the traditional sense. But Wirtz, rather than flattening this area to conform to the classic model, chose to adapt it to the valley's natural slope. This blending of geometry and undulation carries you up the hill, to ribboning rows of vines or into the adjacent rose garden, which blooms white and apricot, pink and yellow, from May to October.

Similarly, the geometry described by yew and box hedges in the perennial garden, to the rear of the house, is intended to guide the feet of the person walking through it, and not as a formal constraint on the lush plantings of hydrangea, azalea, clematis, and wisteria. A Wirtz garden is a garden designed to play upon the interaction between the people who enter it and the natural, if reconstructed, world.

Within this scheme is the inherent tension between flow and control, glossy and matte, rough and soft, open and enclosed. The chestnut fencing cordons off well-spaced pear and plum trees that seem to float against the sky, while neatly trimmed European hawthorn hedges march alongside the meanderings





## an orderly flow

Although this vast garden has a formal organization, it is anything but rigid. Instead of imposing rectilinear form on the landscape, the Wirtzes have created orchards and vineyards whose fluid lines are in keeping with the contours of the landscape. 1. Even the grid of beds in the **potager** curves and expands, taking its shape from the bend in the adjacent road. 2. The herbs and vegetables are orderly inside their box-edged beds—one tidily rowed crop per square—creating an **elegant patchwork** laid atop the sinuous landscape, and visible from the castle. 3. To give the potager **a varied look**, the edible annual plantings are arranged to complement one another, providing contrast from bed to bed. For instance, a box containing a chartreuse lettuce with a ruffled texture might be placed next to golden, feathery dill and the thick, bluish leaves of a broccoli plant. 4. Trees and topiary lend permanence and **structure** to the potager. A hornbeam gazebo provides a focal point (and shade) at the center; topiary of clipped box and yew are scattered symmetrically among the beds; and a sentinel planting of willow-leaved pears marks the edge of the garden. —DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN




ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL HILL



of the Mot. How do the Noortmans and their children go about living in, and with, this bounteous environment? "I take a book into the pergola when I need peace and quiet," said Robert. "Also, we invite friends to come and pick cherries in summer, to go for walks with the children to feed the ducks or study birds' nests. And you know, the wonderful thing is, there were no ducks or even birds here before. Wirtz changed our lives; he informed us, taught us how to live here."

"And to appreciate, to be patient with the garden," added Angelique. "It's paradise, right?"

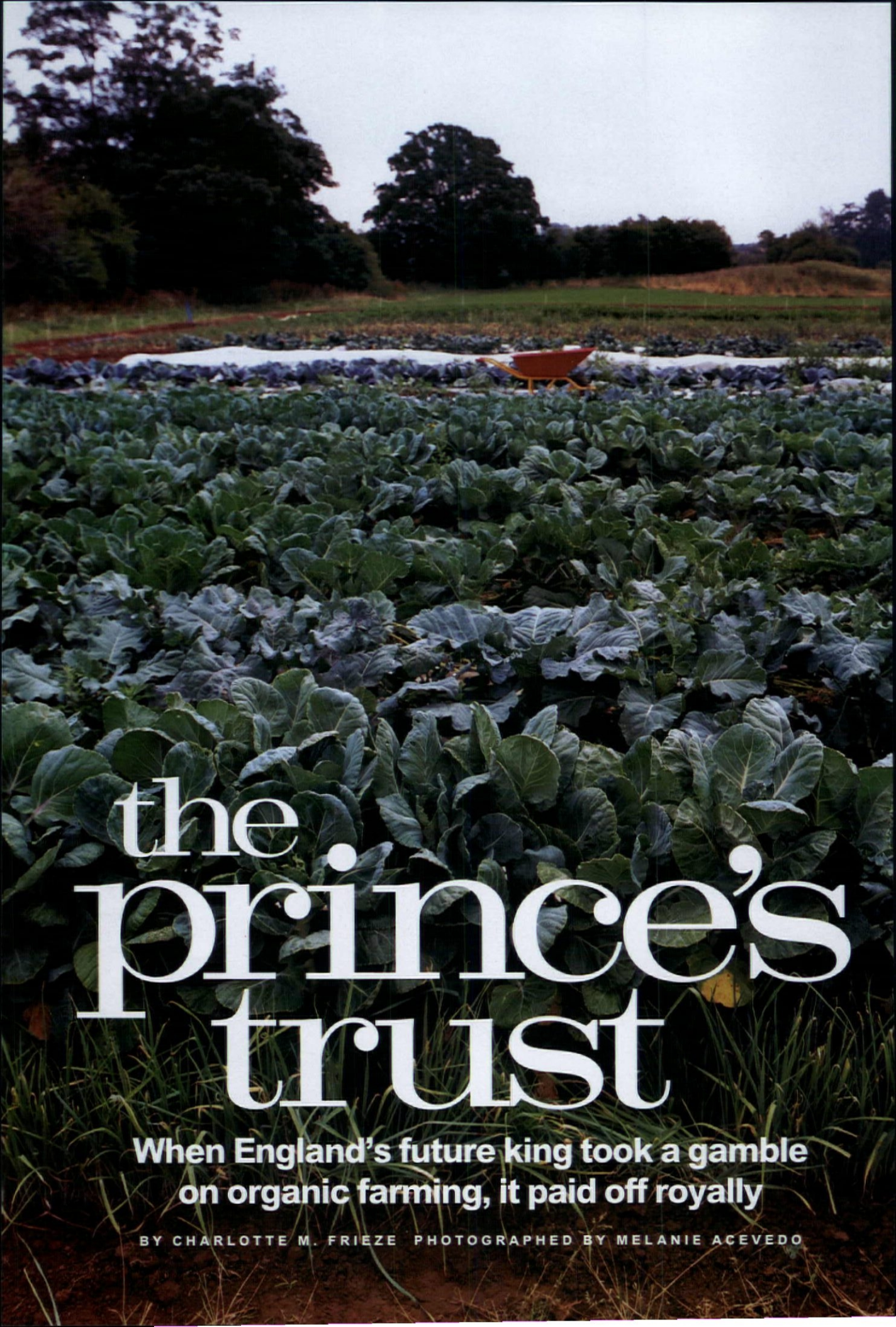
I could only agree—though paradise, applied here, seemed almost an understatement.

**MORE THAN THREE MILES of European hawthorn, left, were planted by Wirtz to amble alongside powdered-stone paths and the Mot stream. These historically correct hedges have to be cut back three times a year by head gardener Jean-Pierre Stiers, during which periods they grow nearly seven feet. BOX AND HIGH YEW hedges, below, conduct visitors along the mossy paths of the flower garden's lush profusion of perennials. THE HORNBEAM PERGOLA, opposite page, punctuated by benches and openings into the adjacent flower garden, puts anyone who pauses here "in a medieval atmosphere," Peter Wirtz says. "It's low and tight, and makes you feel humble."**





he people who enter it and the natural world



# the prince's trust

## When England's future king took a gamble on organic farming, it paid off royally

BY CHARLOTTE M. FRIEZE PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO





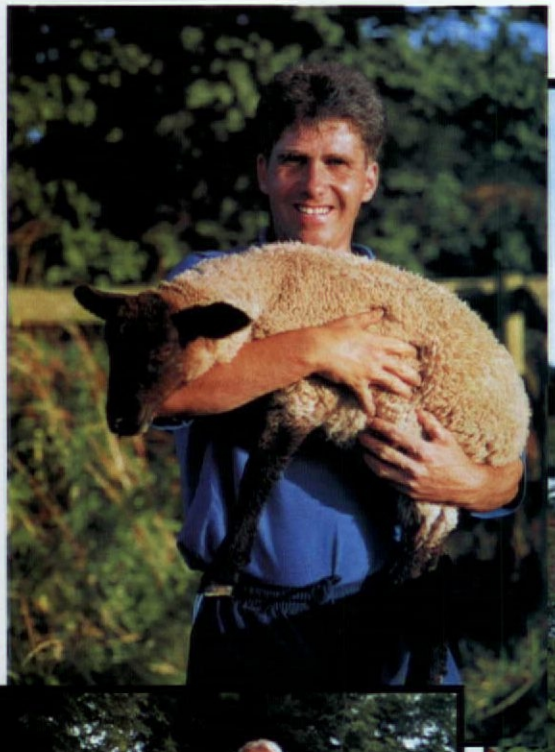
BRIAN MOONEY

LIKE MANY of his fellow urbanites, the Prince of Wales acquired his green thumb later in life. Prior to 1980 this English royal's only hands-on gardening experience consisted of those occasions when he was called upon to plant ceremonial trees in predug holes. Yet 20 years later, the prince presides over Highgrove, a 1,085-acre farm in Gloucestershire that is as picturesque as it is a great achievement.

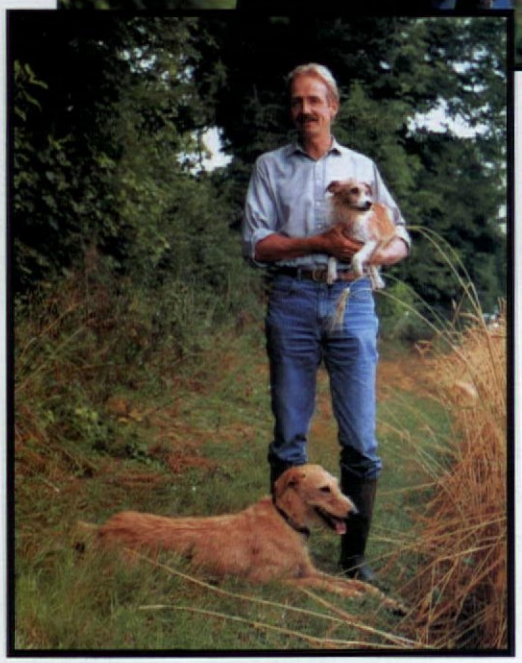
Gazing across the fields of oats and rolled hay bales, with the Tetbury church spire in the distance, one is impressed by the pastoral landscape. Under the prince's direction, the land has been successfully converted from conventional to organic farming. Now profitable, the farm's soil management methods have influenced farmers around the world. What's more, the revenues from a line of cookies produced from the farm's crops go to the prince's charities.

Shortly after moving into Highgrove and creating a home for himself in its eighteenth-century manor house, Prince Charles created a walled kitchen garden on his new property. From the start, he wanted his garden to be organic. For advice, he turned to the Marchioness of Salisbury, a long-standing member of Britain's Soil Association and a champion of chemical-free gardening. She told him about her famous natural fertilizer, a

**THE PRINCE OF WALES, above, surveys a field of organic wheat at the Duchy Home Farm, near his Highgrove estate in Gloucestershire, England. THE THREE-ACRE GARDEN, left, provides fresh vegetables for the "box scheme," in which families from the local community can sign up weekly for delivery of a box of seasonal vegetables.**







**SHEPHERD KEN TOVEY, top left, holds a 16-week-old lamb, a cross between a Suffolk ram and a North Country Mule ewe. IAN COX, above, grows vegetables for the prince and the local community. DAVID WILSON, left, Duchy Home Farm manager, with Bit, his Jack Russell terrier, and Bella, a lurcher, regularly walks the mown grass strips, or weed barriers, surrounding the fields. A BORDER COLLIE named Ben, right, helps Tovey with his sheepherding. A BLACK ABERDEEN ANGUS, below right, sports one of the cowbells that Prince Charles collects. FENCES AND HEDGEROWS planted with such shrubs as dogwood and hazel, below far right, separate fields of hay and oats.**

potent mixture of manure and leaf mold that she calls "Salisbury pudding." One look at her fabulously fecund gardens at Hatfield House, in nearby Hertfordshire, and the prince became a believer.

After five years of gardening for himself at Highgrove, Prince Charles felt ready to take on the challenge of organic farming at the Duchy Home Farm. He hired David Wilson, an agricultural-school graduate, to begin a wholesale organic conversion in 1986. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides were eliminated, and arable fields were farmed in seven-year rotations—three years of clover and grass, followed by beans, winter wheat, and spring oats, then rye. By 1996 the Duchy Home Farm was completely organic. "What we're trying to do," Wilson says, "is to produce food of the highest quality, without degrading the environment and without degrading the soil, so there is something left for future generations."

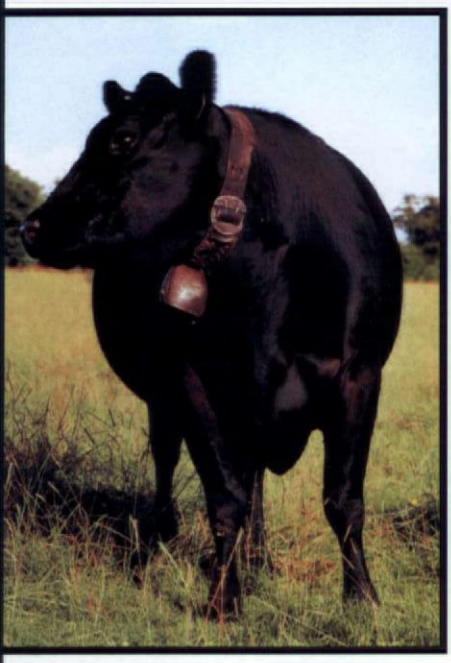
Now the fields around Highgrove make up a glorious patchwork of wheat, oats, rye, and beans, which grow alongside grazing pastures for rare-breed sheep and dairy cows. The wheat and oats are used to produce a line of cookies, Duchy Originals biscuits, which are sold in this country in many natural-food and specialty shops.

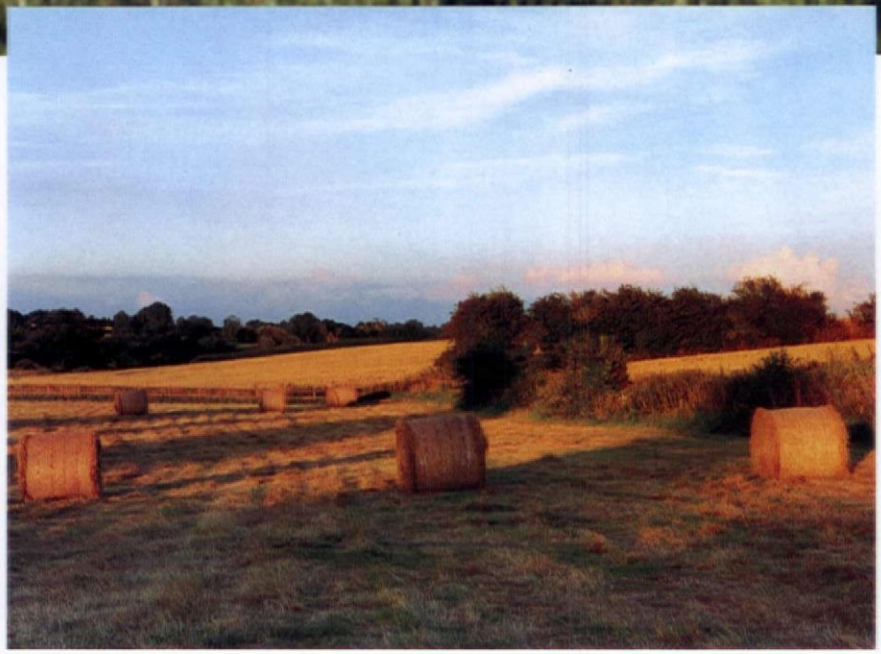
The prince is as involved in the company as his schedule allows. He enthusiastically participates in taste tests and oversees the development of such products as Organic Highland Shortbread cookies. He also painted a watercolor that will appear on a new gift tin. Duchy Originals' profits—more than $320,000 last year—go to the Prince of Wales Charitable Foundation.

In an effort to supply the neighboring community with fresh organic food, the Duchy Home Farm has also begun what it calls a "box scheme." About a hundred local families pay for and receive a weekly box of seasonal organic vegetables, which are grown on a three-acre plot.

Prince Charles, too, tries to eat organically whenever possible. "I am not alone in not wanting to eat any









**A LINE OF ORGANIC COOKIES, Duchy Originals, above, are made from the wheat and oats grown at the Duchy Home Farm. Proceeds from sales benefit the Prince of Wales Charitable Foundation. RED POPPIES, below, grow at the edge of a field of rye. THE PRINCE OF WALES, opposite page, left, inspects a pasture of Ayrshire dairy cows with farm manager David Wilson.**

genetically modified produce," he said in a 1998 speech at the British Soil Association's Organic Food Awards, in which he raised some of his concerns about bioengineered crops. "Personally, I don't think it is right to tamper with the building blocks of life. I also regard the technology as unproven, with the potential to cause serious and possibly irreversible damage to wildlife and the environment."

AT THE Duchy Home Farm, the prince is setting an example for farmers everywhere, including here in the United States. One Virginia landowner, a physician named Mark Head, is converting his family farm to organics after seeing the results at Highgrove. He is doing so with the help of Gary Valen, director of sustainable agriculture for the Humane Society of the United States. "Like the Duchy Home Farm," Valen says, "we want to be the opposite of factory farms that sell their products with little concern for local communities. We want to use methods that are good for people, animals, and the environment."

Today Prince Charles spends as much time at Highgrove as his royal responsibilities permit. It is not unusual to see him strolling through pastures of Black Aberdeen Angus, who are adorned with the cowbells he has collected from as far away as Austria and Italy. Every once in a while, the prince will stop to jot down one of what Wilson calls his "famous red notes," an idea—written in red ink, and usually on the run—about a new location for a tree, perhaps, or a green path. "The Prince of Wales has a very keen eye for detail," Wilson says. "He'll look at the landscape, and that will give him a feel as to where to plant something, whether it's a hedgerow or a clump of trees. He can envision how it will look in the future."

Walking through the fields with Wilson and his two dogs, one can't help but be impressed by the bucolic vista. The traditional hedgerows and stone walls separating the fields seem worthy of a Constable. Bright red poppies, Queen Anne's lace, and other wildflowers



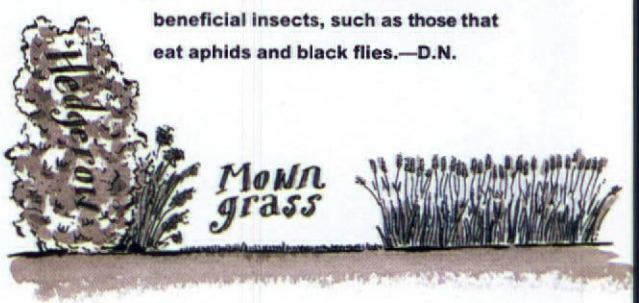


punctuate the grass margins between the fields. Rare brown-and-white Irish Moiled cows graze contentedly among Ayrshire dairy cattle. Black Hebridean sheep, an endangered breed, peer out from the shade of ancient gnarled oaks.

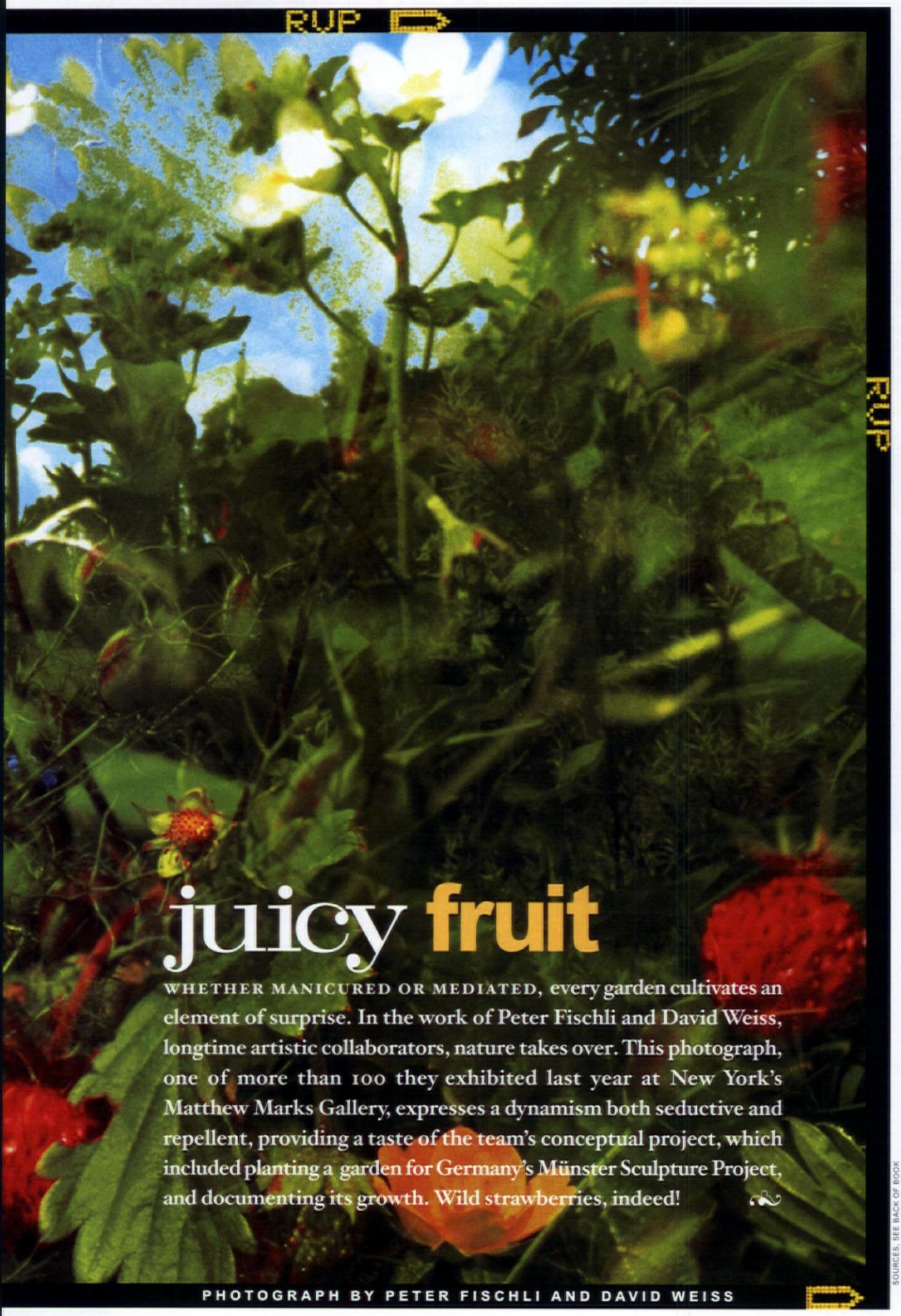
Yet Highgrove is more than just an exquisite environment; it is proof that organic farming can work. "The great achievement is that we have managed to convert the whole farm to an organic system, despite the advice of accountants and consultants who all said it can't be done," the Prince of Wales has said. "But I am one of those people who tries to operate more on an instinctive basis. I just felt this was the right thing: to take a more sensitive approach to farming the soil, an approach in harmony with nature, rather than battling against it."

## the royal soil: going organic, step by step

**Organic standards are outlined by many organizations around the world, but in Britain, the most widely respected of such groups is the Soil Association, a charitable organization whose symbol appears on the prince's Duchy Originals cookies. His farm at Highgrove follows many of the Soil Association's organic recommendations, including: 1. No chemical fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, or insecticides are used. (A soil must be free of chemical dependence for two years before it or its crops may be called organic.) 2. Crops are grown on a planned rotation to sustain soil fertility. Where an exhaustive crop (one that depletes the soil's nutrients) such as cabbage is grown one year, a restorative crop (one that adds nutrients) like beans is grown the next. The prince's farm is on a seven-year schedule, but most home gardeners rotate their vegetables on a three-year plan. 3. Permanent areas of rough grassland are maintained around the farm's fields. Some are sown with wildflowers in order to encourage a diversity of wildlife. This grass field margin is cut in summer as a weed barrier and short-grass habitat, while the section adjacent to the hedge is left to flower and seed, providing cover for birds and beneficial insects, such as those that eat aphids and black flies.—D.N.**



RUP



# juicy fruit

WHETHER MANICURED OR MEDIATED, every garden cultivates an element of surprise. In the work of Peter Fischli and David Weiss, longtime artistic collaborators, nature takes over. This photograph, one of more than 100 they exhibited last year at New York's Matthew Marks Gallery, expresses a dynamism both seductive and repellent, providing a taste of the team's conceptual project, which included planting a garden for Germany's Münster Sculpture Project, and documenting its growth. Wild strawberries, indeed!

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER FISCHLI AND DAVID WEISS

SOURCES, SEE BACK OF BOOK





# pressed for time

Silken olive oil and lush produce are just some of the lasting pleasures of Nan McEvoy's Marin County ranch

WRITTEN BY ALISON COOK PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN



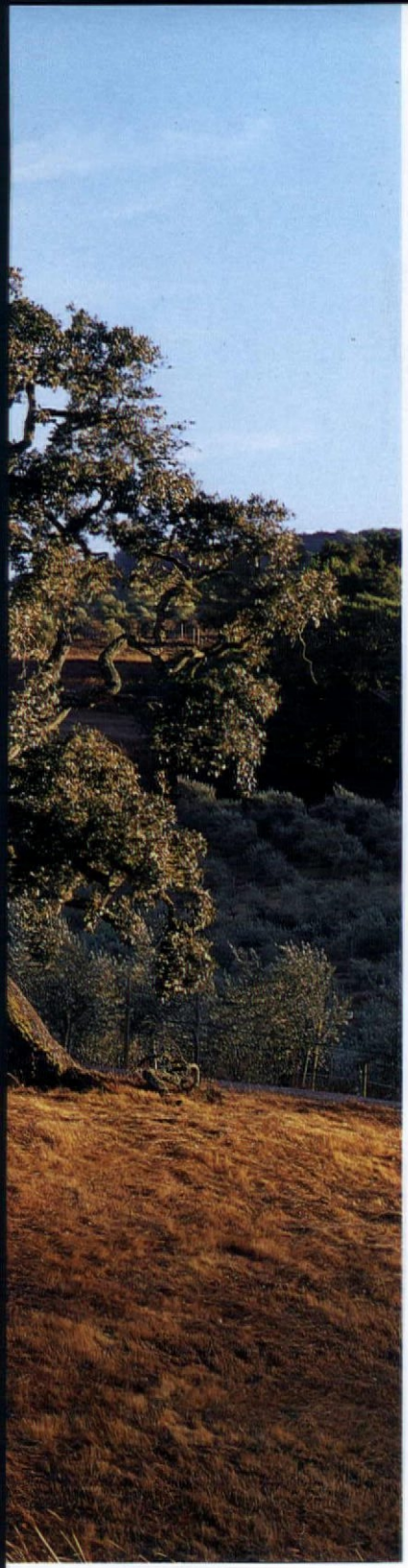
**ITALIAN OLIVES**, far left, make a Tuscan-style oil that suits the produce from Nan McEvoy's exuberant kitchen garden. Among her treasures, this page: 'Lillian's Heirloom Yellow' and 'Orange Russian 117' tomatoes, curlicued 'Zucchetta Rampicante' squash, 'Laura' leeks, 'Suyo Long' cucumber, and 'Black Bell' eggplant.



**SILVERY OLIVE GROVES** have reshaped the native landscape of oak-dotted hills. **GARDENER** Margaret Koski-Kent, opposite page, brings in lunch supplies from the potager's hillside annex. Its flowers, herbs, and greenery yield daily table arrangements.

THE McEVOY RANCH—source of a California olive oil so serious you can practically sip it like fine tequila—would not be half as compelling a place without its kitchen garden. An exuberance of towering wooden tepees and bamboo corrals, this year-round cornucopia flourishes just outside the windows of *San Francisco Chronicle* heiress Nan Tucker McEvoy's freestanding country kitchen, at the heart of a compound cradled in the close-cropped hills of northernmost Marin County.

Several times a week, McEvoy's ranch team gathers at the long kitchen table for a staff lunch that draws on organic seasonal produce to simple, dazzling effect. Employee perks don't get any better than this. To eat delicate, feathery-topped 'Packman F1' broccoli picked an hour ago is like meeting the vegetable for the first time. Baby crookneck squashes wearing green caps consort with twiggy haricots 'Vernandon' so young that you scarcely have to top and tail them; slivers of ranch-cured olives wake up the gentle flavors without manhandling them. And a salad hand-tumbled by Gerald Gass, one of McEvoy's



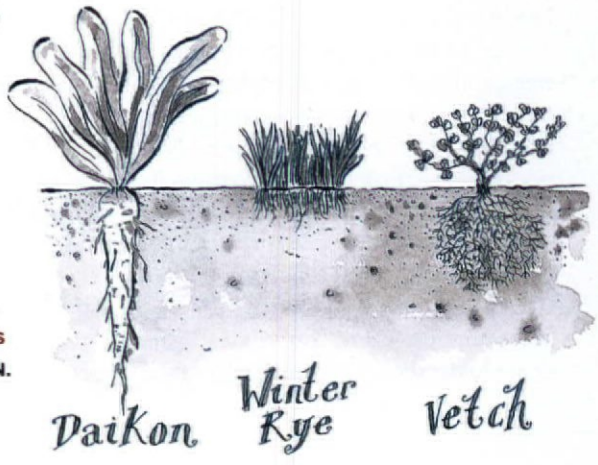


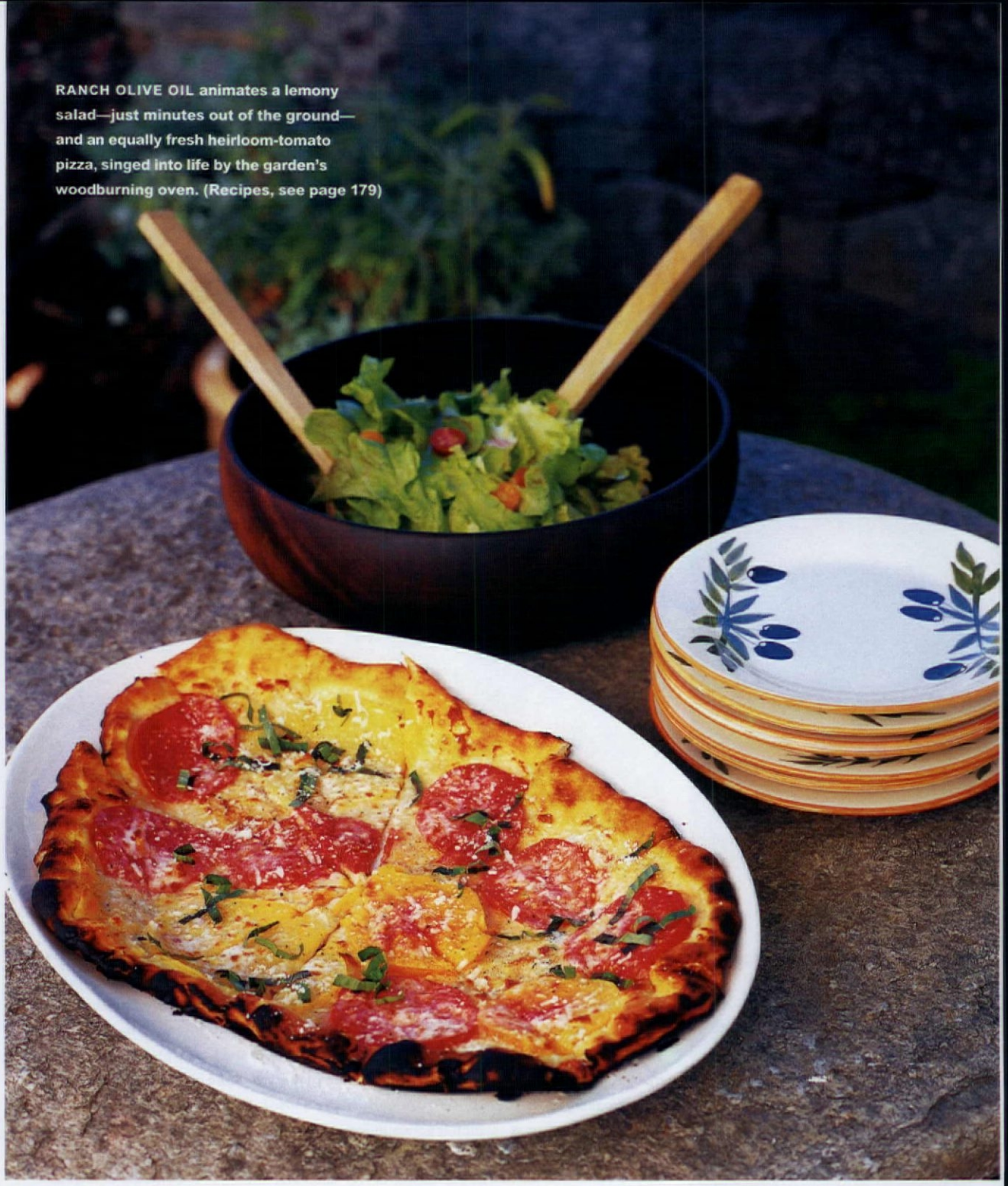
two full-time chefs, vibrates with so much life and color—from the tang of its lemon dressing to its stained-glass cubes of 'Orange Russian 117' and 'Lillian's Heirloom Yellow' tomatoes—that it almost breaks your heart. When, you find yourself lamenting, will I eat a salad this fresh again?

Answer: when you plant your own kitchen garden. It doesn't have to be as

## inside dirt

**For head gardener Margaret Koski-Kent, organic gardening at the McEvoy ranch begins with healthy soil. "We feed the soil, the soil provides for the plants, and the plants provide for us," she declares. In addition to advocating crop rotation, which foils pests while allowing the earth to replenish itself, Koski-Kent offers the following tips for fostering healthy soil and strong, disease-resistant plants: 1. At annual sowing time, she works plenty of well-rotted compost into the soil. 2. "Hungry" plants, like globe artichoke and horseradish, receive a topdressing of farmyard manure early in the season. 3. Instead of letting beds lie fallow after a harvest—which leaches nutrients and causes eroding—Koski-Kent keeps soil fertile by planting cover crops. In spring she turns them under, to add organic matter and treat a variety of soil ills. Legumes like clover and vetch increase the amount of nitrogen in the earth. They are particularly good cover crops for plots where "heavy feeders" like broccoli and cauliflower grow. 4. To break up heavy clay soil, Koski-Kent plants mustard and daikon. Their deep taproots act like wedges, opening up the earth for increased aeration and water penetration. 5. She likes cereal crops—winter rye, wheat—which improve a soil's tilth, or physical condition. —D.N.**





RANCH OLIVE OIL animates a lemony salad—just minutes out of the ground—and an equally fresh heirloom-tomato pizza, singed into life by the garden's woodburning oven. (Recipes, see page 179)

grand as McEvoy's, with its sitting-height walls of precisely chiseled stone, its perimeter of dwarf Meyer lemon trees, and its alluring side grottoes fitted out for picnicking with a water spout here, a floor of inlaid stone there. Nor does it have to make your kitchen as self-sufficient as this one, its chefs supplied with everything from celery to pomegranates to blond autumn raspberries from a neat, bamboo-rimmed hedge.

It's the ideas that count. Head gardener Margaret Koski-Kent uses a whole carnival of brassicas as design elements, from a blue-green surf of broccoli to a sturdy froth of cabbage heads. She combs seed-saving sources for old-fashioned vegetables. She weaves spiky sea holly, tossing spires of cleome or wild, sci-fi amaranth heads into the mix. Everything from finely ruched lettuces to airy cilantro is eligible for daily table arrangements that mesh garden and kitchen even tighter. And her rustic wooden garden supports project a cock-eyed, "I could do that" charm that subverts the princely scale of McEvoy's ranch-in-progress, where the groan of earth movers and the clink of stonemasons are near constant sound effects.

The subversion is as amusing as it is fitting. McEvoy is a shrewd, wry sort, given to stalking her domain in denims, scuffed midheels, and a big pink dinner ring. Although she has reshaped this valley landscape with Olmstedian sweep and sensitivity—from gleaming new ponds to Mediterranean groves that look as if they belong *(Cont. on page 179)*

# RECIPE

## ROAST CHICKEN WITH LEMON AND BAY LAUREL

Serves 2 to 4

**1** **4-lb. whole frying chicken, preferably organic**
**2 Tbsp.** **McEvoy of Marin extra-virgin olive oil**
**2** **lemons, rolled on counter to free juice, and quartered**
**2 tsp.** **coarsely ground black pepper**
**20** **leaves fresh California bay laurel, or 15 dried bay leaves**
**1 tsp.** **kosher or sea salt**
**2 cups** **chicken stock or water**

▶ Rinse the chicken and pat dry. Place the chicken in a bowl or heavy plastic bag with all ingredients except salt and stock or water, and turn to coat well. Cover and refrigerate. ▶ Marinate 12 to 36 hours, turning twice. Remove chicken from refrigerator at least 1 hour before roasting.

▶ Build a moderate fire in a wood-fired oven, or preheat a conventional oven to 425 degrees. ▶ Rub 1/2 tsp. of the kosher or sea in the chicken's cavity, and add half of the laurel leaves and as many of the lemon quarters as will fit. Rub the outside of the chicken with remaining 1/2 tsp. salt, and place, back up, on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. ▶ Add 1/2 cup of the chicken stock or water, the marinade, and the juice from the remaining lemon quarters to the bottom of the pan, and roast for 35 minutes, basting once. Watch carefully, adding stock as the liquid evaporates. (Rotate the chicken often if using a wood-fired oven.) ▶ Turn chicken breast side up, and continue roasting for another 40 minutes, basting several times with the accumulated pan juices and juice from the remaining lemon quarters. Chicken is done when the thighs register 165 degrees and the juices run clear. ▶ Cover chicken, and let rest 15 minutes. Strain pan juices, removing some of the fat if desired. Check seasoning, and serve with strained pan juices.

## LEMON VINAIGRETTE

Serves 6 to 8

**1/2 cup** **extra-virgin olive oil**
**3 Tbsp.** **lemon juice**
**2 tsp.** **red wine vinegar**
**1** **large shallot, finely diced**
**1 1/2 tsp.** **freshly grated lemon zest**
**1/2 tsp.** **sea or kosher salt**
**1/4 tsp.** **freshly ground black pepper**

▶ Place all ingredients in a small bowl, and whisk to combine. ▶ Check seasoning.





**NAN McEVOY, second from left, delights in the communal staff lunches that fill her freestanding country kitchen, top. OUTSIDE, the wood oven gives a crackly skin to chicken perfumed with potent hillside bay laurel leaves.**

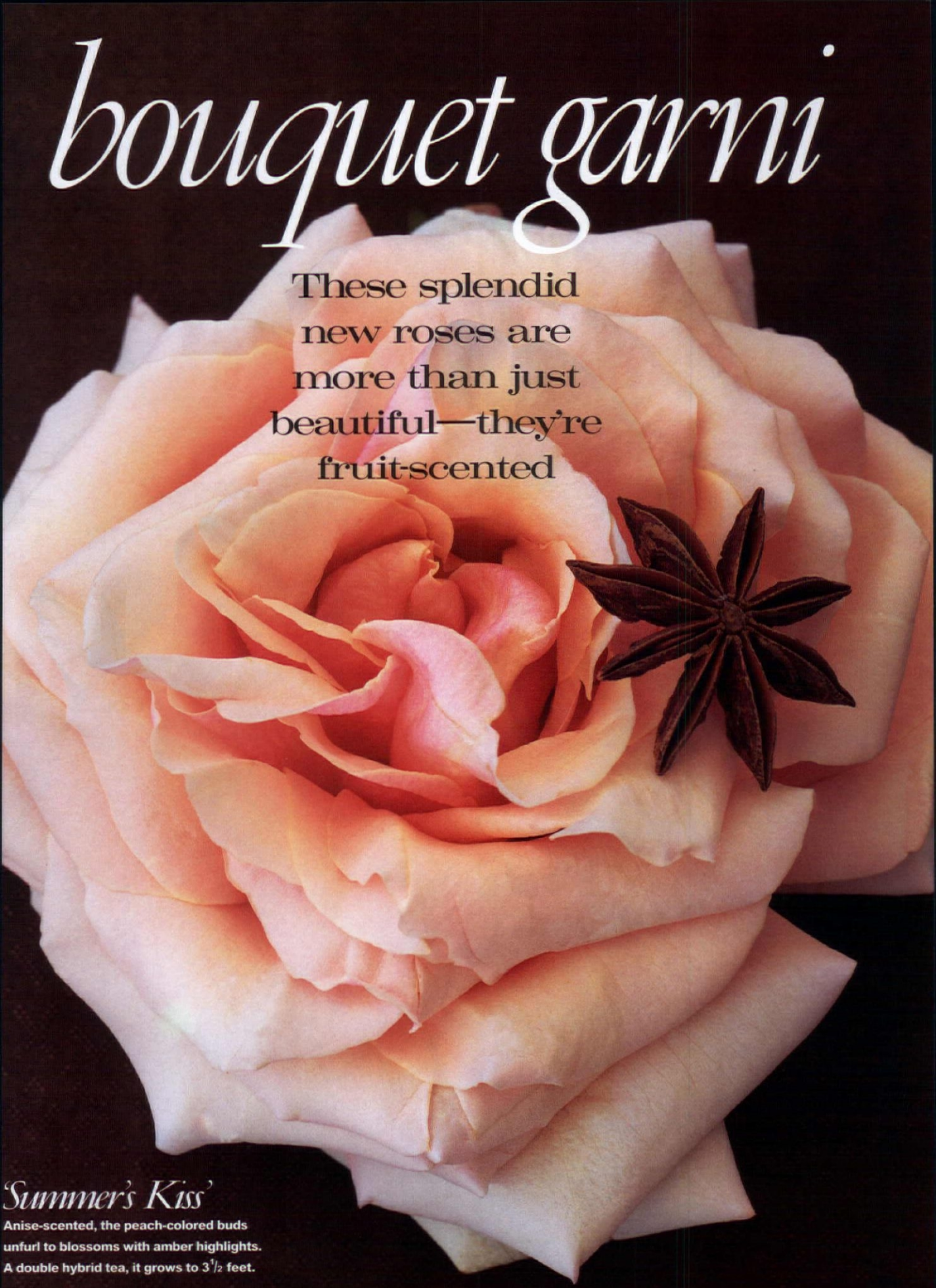


## *'Claudia Cardinale'*

**As these rich yellow buds open to buff-colored pom-poms, they release a fresh apple fragrance. The bush grows to 4 to 6 feet.**

# bouquet garni

## These splendid new roses are more than just beautiful—they're fruit-scented



*'Summer's Kiss'*

**Anise-scented, the peach-colored buds unfurl to blossoms with amber highlights. A double hybrid tea, it grows to 3 1/2 feet.**

PHOTOGRAPHED BY DANA GALLAGHER PRODUCED BY CHARLOTTE M. FRIEZE

STYLED BY STEPHEN ORR



## *'Sonia Rykiel'*

**Infusing the garden with the sce of oranges, these blooms open to reveal golden centers. The sh has an open habit like an antiqu tea rose and grows to 3 1/2 feet.**



## *'Isabel Renaissance'*

**One of the best red roses in years, this old-fashioned double bloom with reflexive petals has a delicious raspberry bouquet. A large shrub rose, it grows to 5 by 5 feet.**



## Care and Feedin

These new roses combine the fragrances and shapes of old-fashioned roses with the modern benefits of profuse blooming and disease resistance. They will flourish given favorab conditions. **SUN:** Minimu of 6 hours; morning sun is best. **HARDINESS:** Zones 5 to 10. **SOIL:** From 18 to 24 inches deep, high in organics, with good drainage. **WATER:** At least 1 inch per week. Water thoroughly in the mornin

## *'Toulouse-Lautrec'*

**With its striking yellow peony-style blossoms and sweet lemo tea fragrance, this floriferous hybrid tea is hard to miss. Grow 4 to 5 feet tall, it's at home in a flower bed or a cutting garden.**

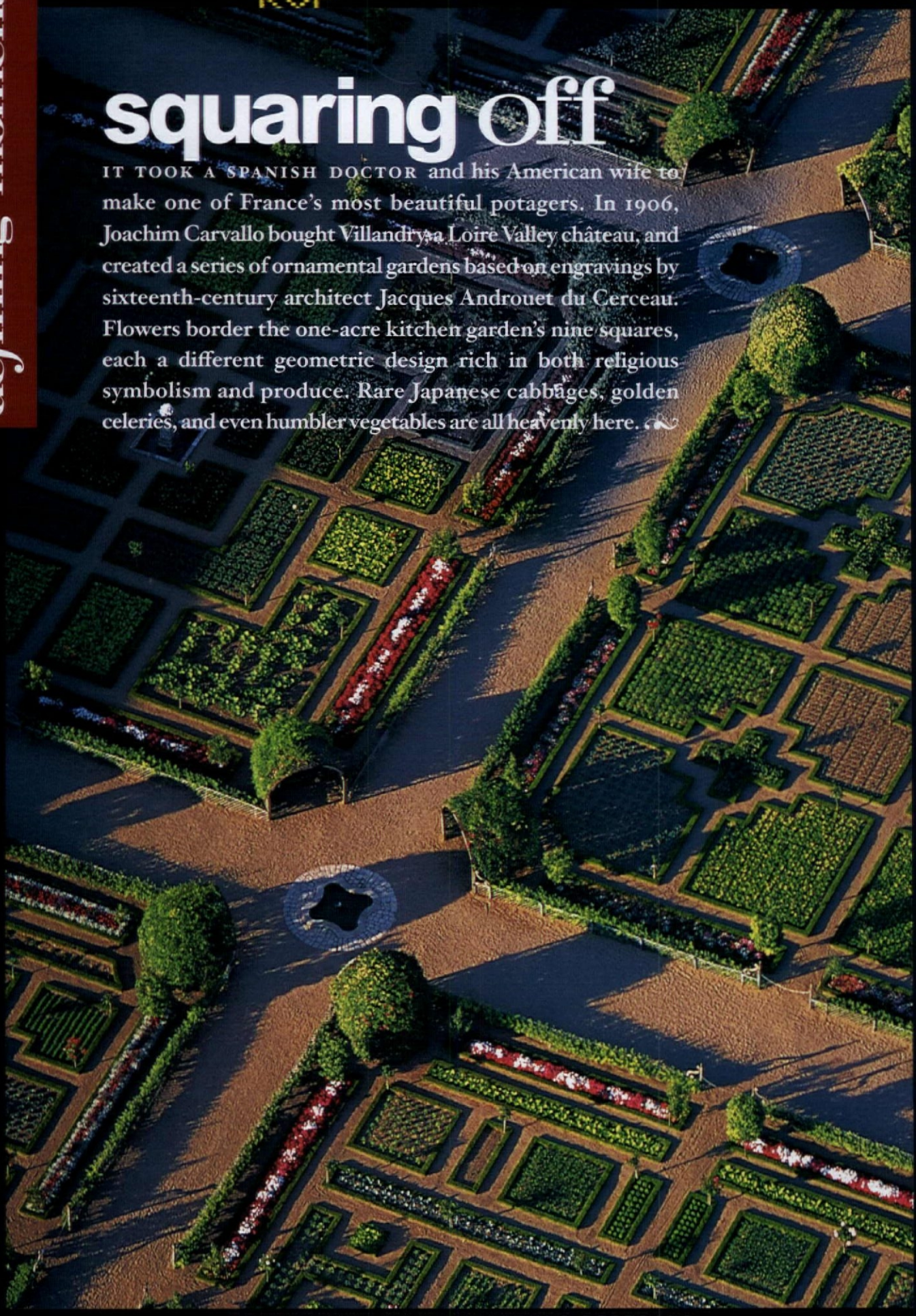


## *'Leila Verde' and 'Florance Delattre'*

**This purply duo perfumes the garden with a spicy lemon fragrance. Growing just 2 to 3 feet high, 'Leila Verde,' a rare floribunda with single light lavender blooms, is perfect for a small garden. 'Florance Delattre,' a 4-to-5-foot shrub rose, presents its gray-violet blossoms on flexible canes that can be trained on pillars or tripods.**

# squaring off

IT TOOK A SPANISH DOCTOR and his American wife to make one of France's most beautiful potagers. In 1906, Joachim Carvallo bought Villandry, a Loire Valley château, and created a series of ornamental gardens based on engravings by sixteenth-century architect Jacques Androuet du Cerceau. Flowers border the one-acre kitchen garden's nine squares, each a different geometric design rich in both religious symbolism and produce. Rare Japanese cabbages, golden celeries, and even humbler vegetables are all heavenly here.



PHOTOGRAPH BY YANN ARTHUS-BERTRAND

SOURCES, SEE BACK OF BOOK.





A TABLE SETTING, above, created by Giuppi Pietromarchi and dedicated to Ceres, celebrates the corn harvest. Pietromarchi grandchildren relax next to hay mounds, left. THE GAZEBO, by Giuppi Pietromarchi, is topped by Matthew Spender's sculpture *Giuppi*, which is meant to represent the spirit of the garden, opposite page.

# outdoor theater

## Giuppi Pietromarchi's garden is a series of dramatically staged events



BY MARELLA CARACCIOLO PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO

Remember Méret Oppenheim's famous teacup? The one made of real fur, that set your lips tingling just to look at it? Here is a garden that will provide a similar frisson. Giuppi Pietromarchi, a flamboyant garden designer who lives and works in Tuscany, has created a garden of paradox and wit, meant to delight herself and others. "My garden is a stage," she says. "It's about unrestrained imagination and a desire to surprise."

"Surprise" may be too mild a word to describe the shock of walking into one of the garden's many "rooms" and finding a wall-to-wall carpet of bright ripe tomatoes. "They were in season," says Pietromarchi nonchalantly. "What else can you do with hundreds of tomatoes from the surrounding fields?"

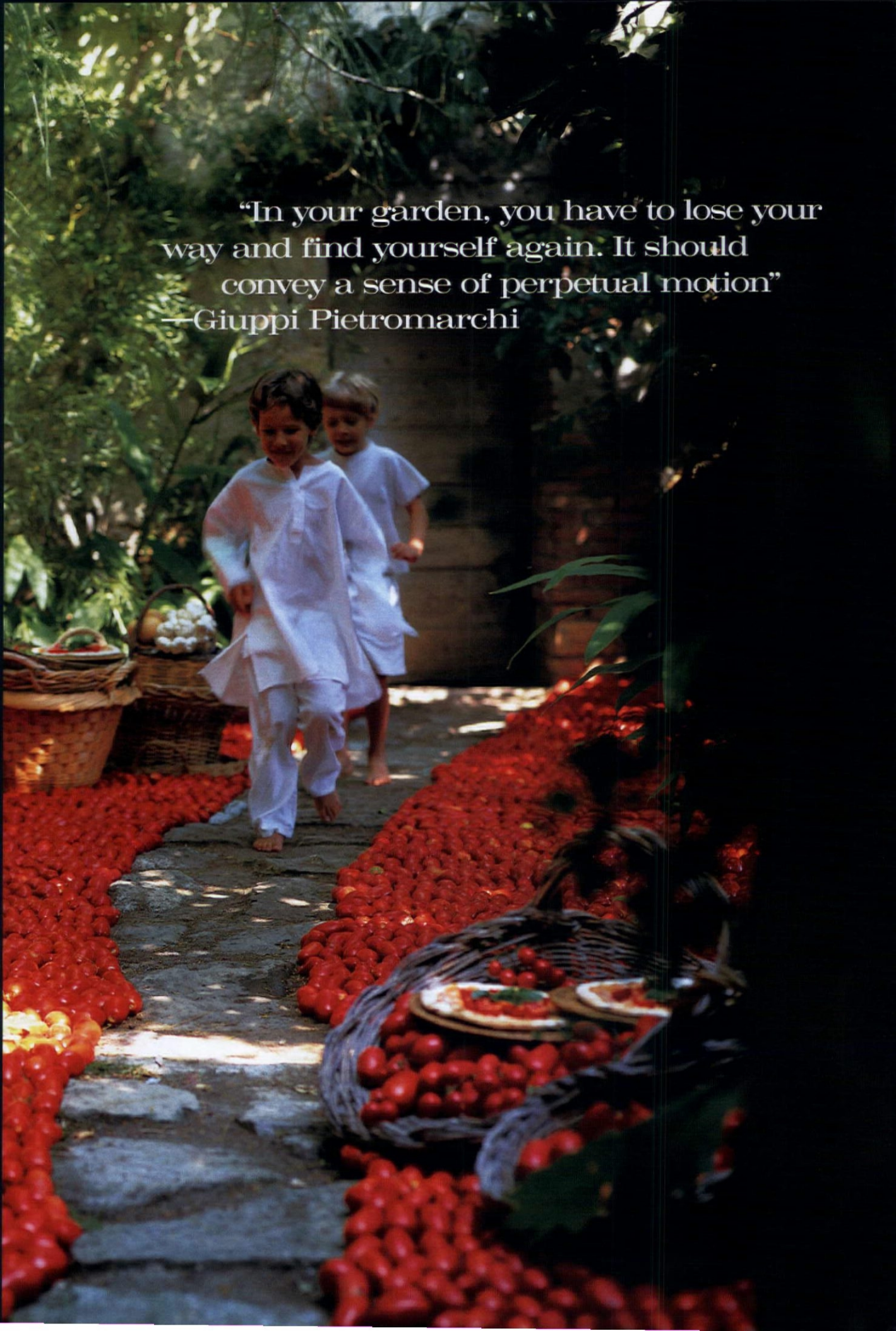
Pietromarchi was born into a family that owned most of the nurseries in central and northern Italy. She has spent much of her adult life working hands-on in gardens. Not only does she grow her own fruits and vegetables, transforming them into delicious meals for family and friends, but she is also an accomplished designer who makes remarkable table and garden sets using natural materials.

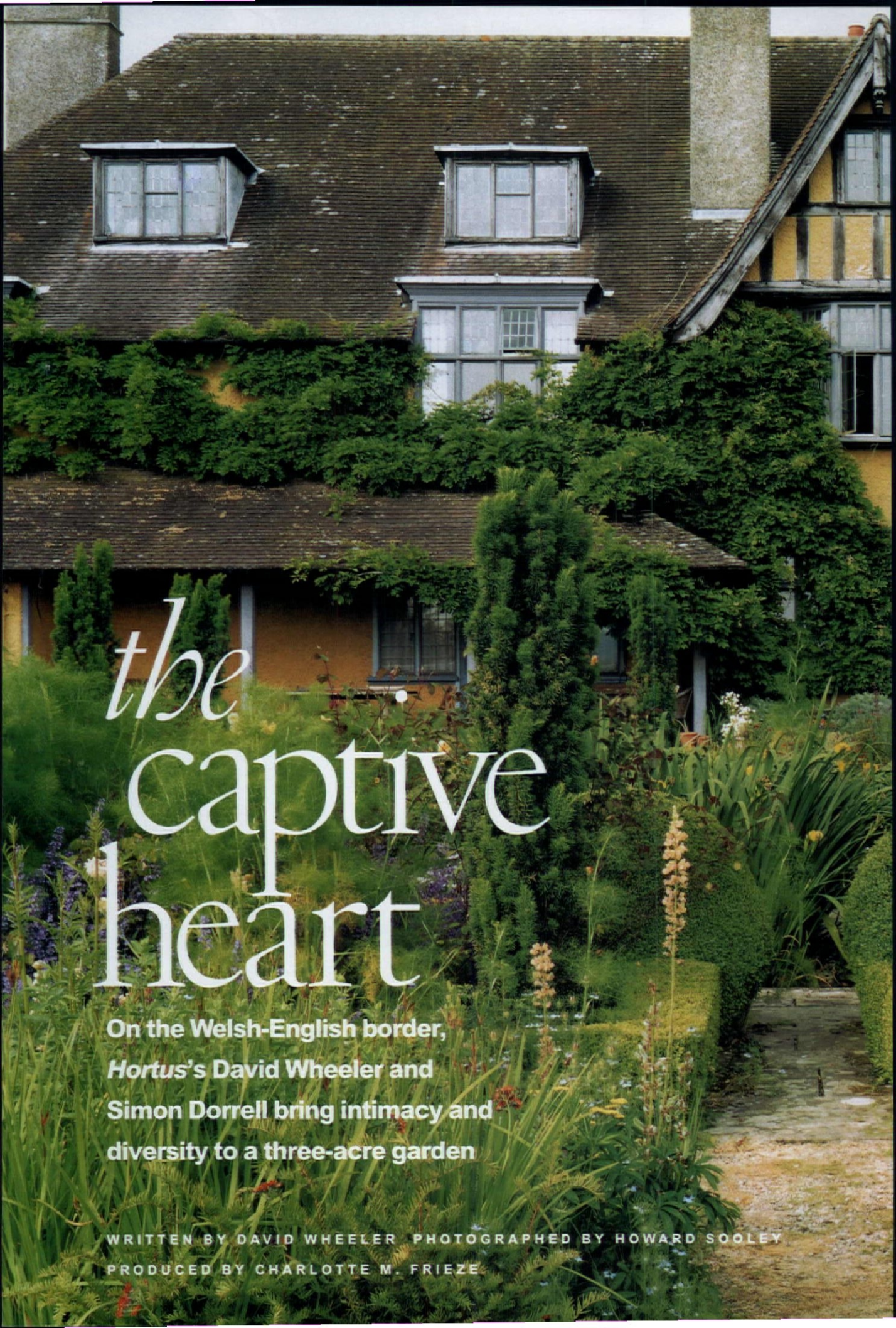
Like her gardens, Pietromarchi is full of surprises. "In your garden," she says, "you have to be able to lose your way and find yourself again and again, with doors leading to secret areas, and settings that change according to seasons and mood. This, to me, is the essence of gardening."

Pietromarchi also holds courses at her home, for people interested in the art of decorating with flowers, fruits, and vegetables. (For more information, send a fax to 39-0564-895123.)



**GUGLIELMO AND NICOLA, Giuppi Pietromarchi's grandchildren, run along a path in a carpet of San Marzano tomatoes. Squash from another part of the garden hang over a stone bench by French artist Pierre-Marie Lejeune.**


"In your garden, you have to lose your
way and find yourself again. It should
convey a sense of perpetual motion"
—Giuppi Pietromarchi



# *the* captive heart

**On the Welsh-English border, *Hortus*'s David Wheeler and Simon Dorrell bring intimacy and diversity to a three-acre garden**

WRITTEN BY DAVID WHEELER PHOTOGRAPHED BY HOWARD SOOLEY

PRODUCED BY CHARLOTTE M. FRIEZE



"My garden is an honest place," wrote the American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson more than a century ago; and ours is, too. Honest, because it springs from the two pairs of hands that have made it, and lives or dies according to those same four hands. It has weeds, and it has messy corners. Paths in summer may be blocked for weeks by a barricade of love-in-a-mist or shyly flowering geraniums. Our garden doesn't belong to that galaxy of make-believe places where unseen hands are paid to smooth away the wrinkles. It is not a doll; it has a heart, and like our own hearts when we're working there, it beats with a strong resolve.

In truth, the bones of our garden (squarely on the border where England and Wales meet at the River Lugg) predate us both. The house was built for two spinster shipping heiresses on the eve of the First World War, and subsequent owners have stamped their mark on its three cultivated acres. But when Simon Dorrell and I first saw the property, known as Bryan's Ground, on a hot July evening in 1993, it lay newly bereft of its most recent occupant, a 90-year-old doctor who had taken it on as a retirement plaything in the 1960s.

Summer became winter in the time it took to buy the property, and it wasn't until sunset on a late November afternoon that we drove through the gates of our new world—anxious to make our own mark even at that late hour, at that late season. Fresh snow lay thinly over the grass tennis court and wide lawns; and as it's never wholly dark on snowy nights, we seized the golden, though cold, moment to draw our first tentative lines on our new land.

Simon and I had already gardened together for five years, and while we cherish individual foibles, we are in about as much harmony over garden matters as two people can ever hope to be. Our mutual aim was to break up

**FROM THE SOUTH-FACING FRONT of the house, a herringbone brick terrace leads to the original Sunk Garden. Water lilies growing in the circular pond were once much admired by playwright George Bernard Shaw, who was a regular visitor to Bryan's Ground in the years following the First World War.**





**THE SUNK GARDEN, above, as seen from the terrace, looking toward the hills of Wales. 'Buff Beauty,' 'Windrush,' 'Graham Stuart Thomas,' and 'Mrs. Oakley Fisher' roses grow in box-edged beds among catnip and fennel. VIRGINIA CREEPER drapes a gable on the north side of the house. IN THE WALLED GARDEN, opposite page, the rose 'Alexandre Girault' grows above *Stachys lanata* and red valerian.**

the open spaces, to create intimacy, to induce diversity, and to give each principal room on the ground floor of the house its own "garden room."

The garden sits in 30 acres of meadow and pasture, and at its hub lies the large, walled Kitchen Garden, lined now by some 120 yards of 8-foot-deep borders of color-themed perennials. We have remodeled its traditional four-square layout to incorporate distinct decorative ideas—after all, we can never eat (or give away) the vast quantities of produce that this fertile soil can yield. Respecting the original plan, we have treated each of the four 50-foot squares in a contrasting way, yet strive to maintain a relationship between them.







**THE ROSE GARDEN** grows on the site of the former tennis lawn. Thirty-two old-rose varieties grow in rectangular beds with obelisks made of recycled timber, each bed housing a yew tree that is being clipped to the shape of its frame.



In one quarter, the Cabinet of Roses, we grow a jumble of shrub and climbing roses that are tolerant of the deep shade thrown by lofty oak, cherry, and lime trees. At the feet of the roses, appreciative of summer shade, are many of the pulmonarias and oriental hellebores that bring the colors of gemstones and Venetian brocades to the garden soon after Christmas. We gave the neighboring square cloisters of hornbeam to frame a shallow reflecting pool—a place of quiet reverie beneath the sweeping branches of an old walnut. The third square is a mixed orchard where, in summer and early autumn, we pick raspberries, red and black currants, gooseberries, apples, pears, and quinces. We recycled the turf for this orchard from the grass tennis court, which has become our second rose garden—60 old varieties pierced with topiaried yew and wooden obelisks—a garden to be enjoyed from the blue sitting room on hot afternoons. We devote the remaining square of the Kitchen Garden—screened by trellis and espaliered apple trees, and set with an intricate network of box-edged paths—to vegetables that cannot be bought in local shops.

Our garden—which also has specially designated areas for spring bulbs, for summer-flowering shrubs, for fall color from leaf and berry, and for statuesque pieces of yew topiary—wraps around us in much the same way as our lives wrap around gardens. As the owner and editor of the gardening quarterly *Hortus,* we seem to eat, drink, and breathe them. I work too as a freelance garden writer, with commissions from







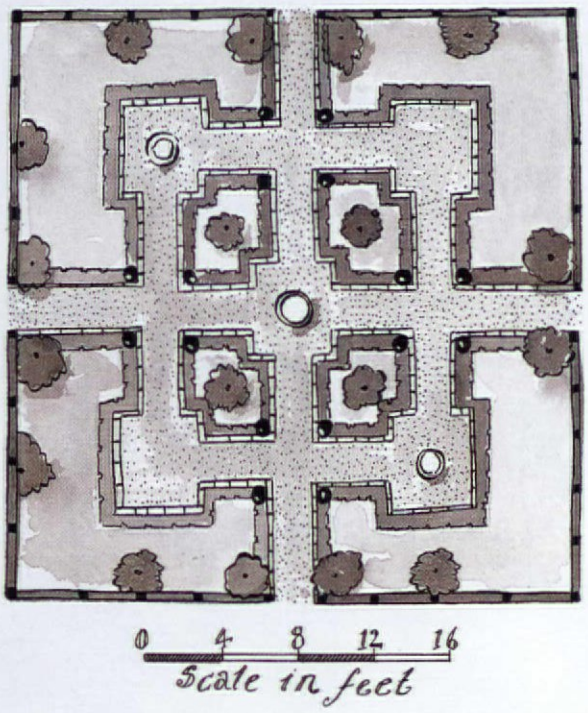
**THE SULKING HOUSE**, above, which Dorrell and a friend built for Wheeler's birthday in 1995, is in the part of the garden known as Crackenthorpe, with Gothic borders of black and wine-red flowering plants. **TWIN BORDERS**, top right, leading to the drawing room lantern are filled with flowers and shrubs—*Elaeagnus angustifolia* 'Quicksilver' and *Amelanchier canadensis*—whose colors harmonize with the room's interior decoration. **PLEACHED LIME TREES** and Irish yews, right, frame a vista—extended by a stone vase—to the meadow.



WHEN THE AURICULAS have finishe flowering, the Auricula Theater, oppo page, houses a collection of *objets trouvées* from the garden and countr AN OVERVIEW of the Kitchen Garde seen from the top of the 10-foot-high By midsummer the path is choked wi blue love-in-a-mist, and many of the vegetables and salads have already been harvested in the potager. In Sep ber the yew hedges and giant topiary pieces are trimmed, and the pergola pruned. Sources, see back of book.

## a virtuoso plan for vegetables

**Although the vegetable garden is laid out in a formal manner, David Wheeler describes it as "a lovely, tangled mess" by high summer. 1. The basic structure is taken from medieval monastery gardens, which were enclosed with narrow beds bisected by slender paths. 2. All plantings are accessible from the paths, so the soil remains sweet and uncompacted. 3. Beds are lined with boxwood (and brick, which will be lifted when the box grows), defining the garden's structure in early spring, and retaining soil. 4. Chippings of local granite, about 2 inches deep, cover the paths. Beneath the gravel, trash bags help suppress weeds. 5. Metal cauldrons act as focal points where the paths cross, and make a rustic, utilitarian decoration. Filled with rainwater, they attract birds, allow for quick dipping of watering cans, and provide refreshment for dogs. 6. Wheeler and Dorrell have several compost heaps, but also avail themselves of compost through their county's green waste program. Residents are encouraged to drop off such green waste as leaves and grass clippings, and once it is composted, all are welcome to as much as they want. See if there is a similar program in your area. —D.N.**




the United States as well as England. Simon paints and draws a huge range of garden imagery; his works of our garden will be exhibited at Munder-Skiles in New York in May. Together we give informal lectures about the gardens we have made for ourselves or for others.

Indoors, on the kitchen table, Simon has painted a detailed map of the garden, a prompt during meals and in hours of darkness or foul weather to discussion of



our ongoing projects. It is then that we wonder whether we should plant more *Verbena bonariensis* among the hundreds of Siberian irises that surround each apple tree in the orchard, or ponder additions to the thick swarm of yellow lilies among the fragrant azaleas and oak-leaf hydrangeas.

"The avenue of limes that was planted only five years ago—should we pleach it now?"

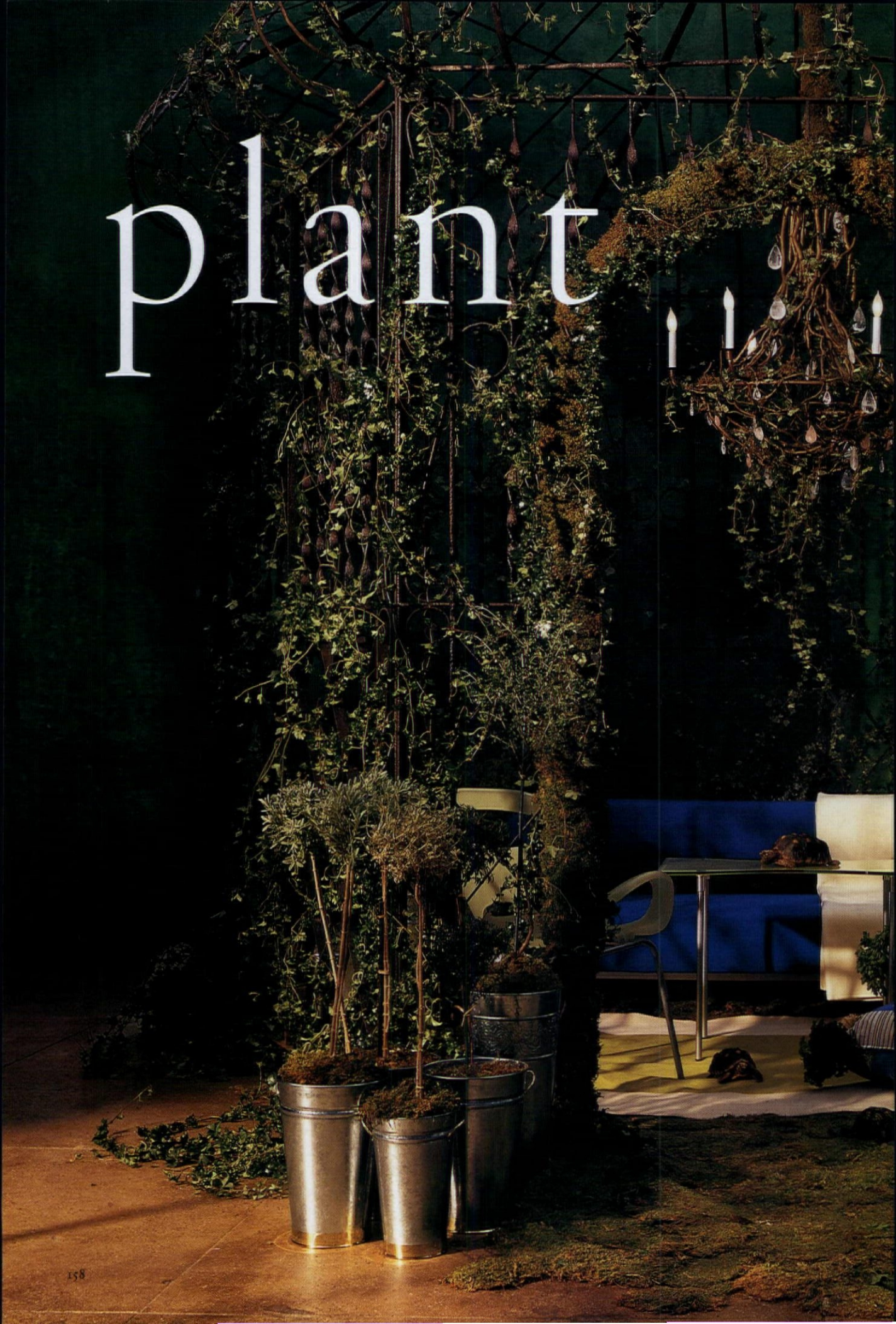
"Can we afford to replace with box plants the hostas that grow in twenty-four terra-cotta pots in the Stone Parterre?"

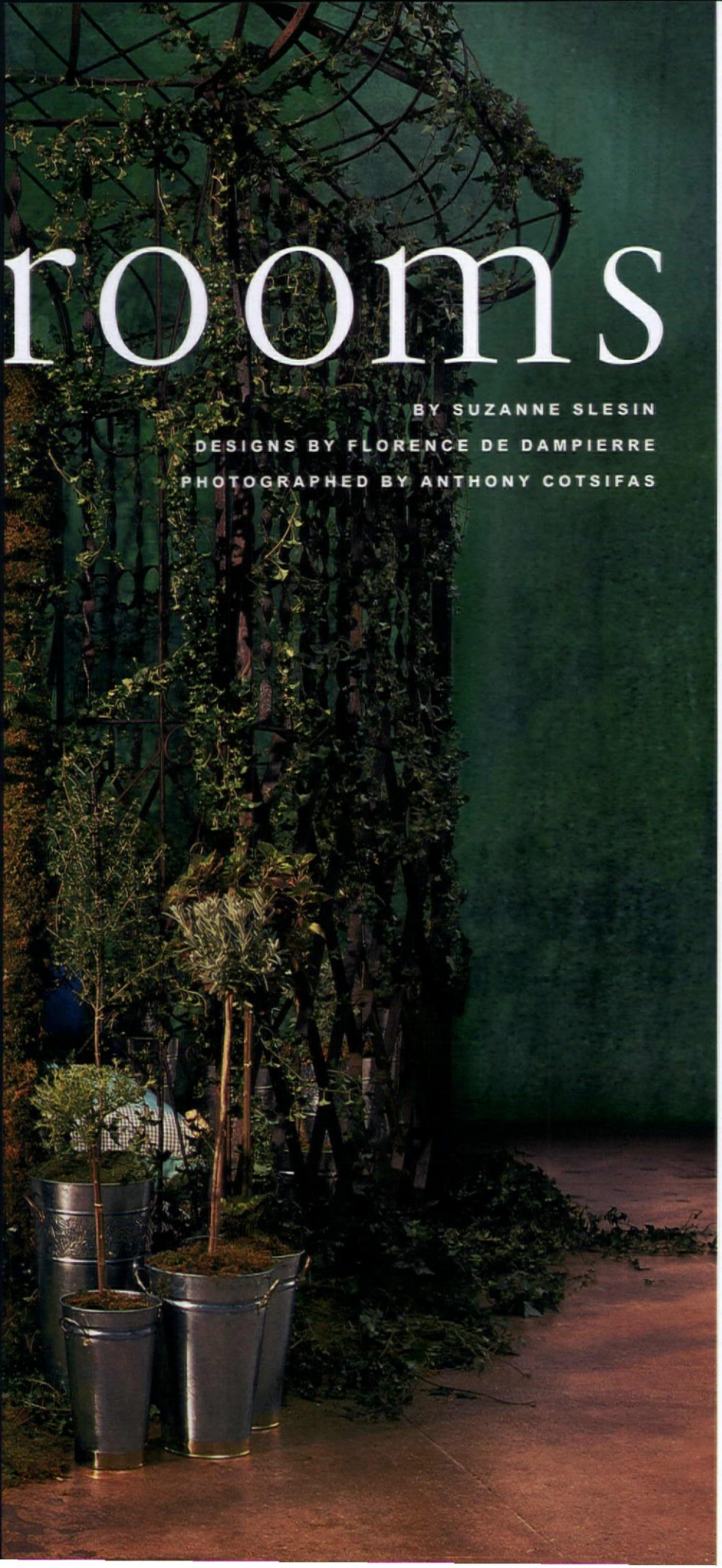
"Don't you think six hundred hellebores in the October Garden are enough?" (Answer: "No!")

"Is there enough stone left over from building the belvedere to make a flight of steps leading down from the terrace to the Sunk Garden?" It is here that yellow roses flower all summer among self-sown fennel and indigo-blue catnip.

And, like the fennel, our ideas also run plentifully. Perhaps the English novelist H. E. Bates had us in mind when he quipped, "The garden that is finished is dead." Just as well, for our latest endeavor involves doubling its size.

**DAVID WHEELER**'s *most recent book is* Glyndebourne: A Garden for All Seasons *(The Bryansground Press).*


plant



# rooms

BY SUZANNE SLESIN

DESIGNS BY FLORENCE DE DAMPIERRE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANTHONY COTSIFAS

"Decorating is not only about visual effect, it is also nourishment for the soul," says Florence de Dampierre, the interior designer who imagined the magical trio of scenarios shown here.

**Twine on** Events designer David Tutera wrapped a gazebo from Elizabeth Street Co., NYC, in vines and moss.

**Herbal remedy** Pesto, a cotton from Osborne & Little's Salsa collection, in purple (bordered in Scalamandré's silk stripe Candy) and green (bordered in Scalamandré's Dally, a cotton check), depicts a variety of herbs, which served as inspiration.

**It's magic** Rock crystals hang from one of Joan Sherman's Branch metal chandeliers, available at Pranich & Associates, NYC.

**Sitting pretty** Counterpoint's Paola Lenti designed the Mirto throw and Cornice 25 wool-and-felt rug, which add texture to James Irvine's sofa, from Totem, NYC. Karim Rashid's Trispectra table and Oh chair are also from Totem.

# *the berry patch*

"For me, spring is embodied by fragrant red fruits," says de Dampierre, who thinks that sleeping in a bed of strawberries is the ultimate expression of the season.

**Curl up** in Gaetano Pesce's luxurious, oh-so-strawberry-like felt chair for Cassina, available at Moss, NYC.

**Dream on** in a bed on a strawberry lawn. A Kirk Brummel print, bordered in Tyrol check from Clarence House, covers the head- and footboards. The duvet is in La Coccinelle, from Clarence House.

**Feather your nest** with a pair of cherry pillows in Jubilee, from Summer Hill Ltd. A large pair covered in Kirk Brummel's Rose Hip are bordered in Clarence House's green Coral Chintz. Cesto Cerezas, a yellow-and-red cotton from Brunschwig & Fils, has been used on the floor and bed pillows. All bedding, draperies, and pillows by Carl Dellatore of D & F Workroom.







# *veggie delight*

"Fruits and vegetables aren't accents here, but key elements," says David Tutera, the events designer who added eccentric touches to our sets. "Turning the unimaginable into reality is what I do."

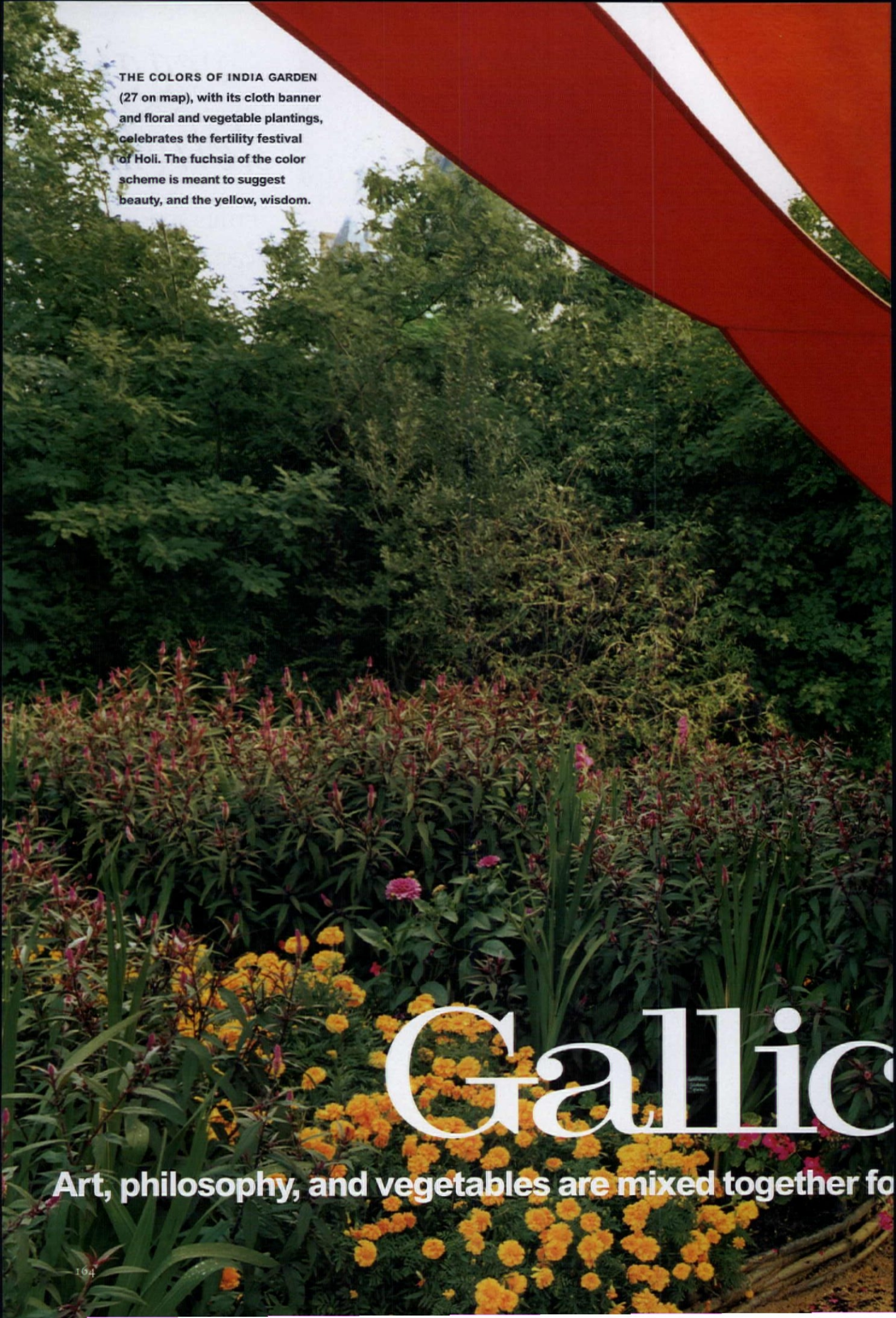
**Well rooted** Antique Chinese root pieces—pedestal table, console, chair—and a ten-arm twig plant stand are from the Newel Art Galleries, Inc., NYC.

**Window garden** Tutera edged the draperies made from Rockwell, a Kravet cotton, with garlic.

**Tablescape** Vegetables cascade onto the ground in one of Tutera's grand garlands. The table is set with chargers from Vietri, Bernardaud dinner plates, and Jardin de Villandry dessert plates from the Devine Corporation. The Grand Lieu cordial glasses and hock glasses are from Cristal Saint-Louis; the Vega Flutissimo flutes, from Baccarat.

**Wall art** Radishes dangle from a sconce. The tea set and cake stand are Bernardaud. Sources, see back of book.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR: KATE TOWNSEND



THE COLORS OF INDIA GARDEN (27 on map), with its cloth banner and floral and vegetable plantings, celebrates the fertility festival of Holi. The fuchsia of the color scheme is meant to suggest beauty, and the yellow, wisdom.

# Gallic

## Art, philosophy, and vegetables are mixed together fo



# Stew

## he annual festival at Chaumont-sur-Loire

WRITTEN BY LORRAINE ALEXANDER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HOWARD SOOLEY

LAST AUGUST, several days after I'd visited the Eighth International Gardens Festival at Chaumont-sur-Loire, a friend in Paris sent me a news clipping. "In France," festival director Jean-Paul Pigeat was quoted as saying, "vegetable gardens still suffer from the system of aligning [placing plants in rows], from the rational organization of space. What we are showing is the exact opposite."

Ah, okay. Now certain slightly loopy things began to fall into place: all those pumpkins I'd seen suspended overhead to imitate, I was told, the sun's perceived movement from dawn to dusk; the tartan-pattern arrangement of sage, shallots, and cabbages, flanked by a display that included a beer bottle and recordings of '70s folk music; kava peppers growing on a sheath of blue netting, intended to represent the watery realm of Oceania. . . .

Wandering among the festival's 30-odd gardens, I found myself in a maze of performance plants. The recipe here seemed to be based on a pinch of science, slipped into a Gallic stew of fantasy and philosophy. This, in other words, was Art.

The setting itself could hardly have been more inspiring: almost nine acres of Jacques Wirtz–designed landscape overlooking the Château de Chaumont. The festival "plots" offer each of the exhibitors a little less than 2,700 square feet of soil in which to work and, most assuredly, play.

In a garden based on "The Three Little Pigs," for instance, the huts as well as the vegetables in front of them each represented a revealing character trait. In Gaspatio Andaluz, the tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers for Spain's classic summer soup were planted in olive-oil drums and set out in a huge white-walled basin like guests at an Andalusian pool party. The Trajectory garden, named for those high-flying pumpkins, required

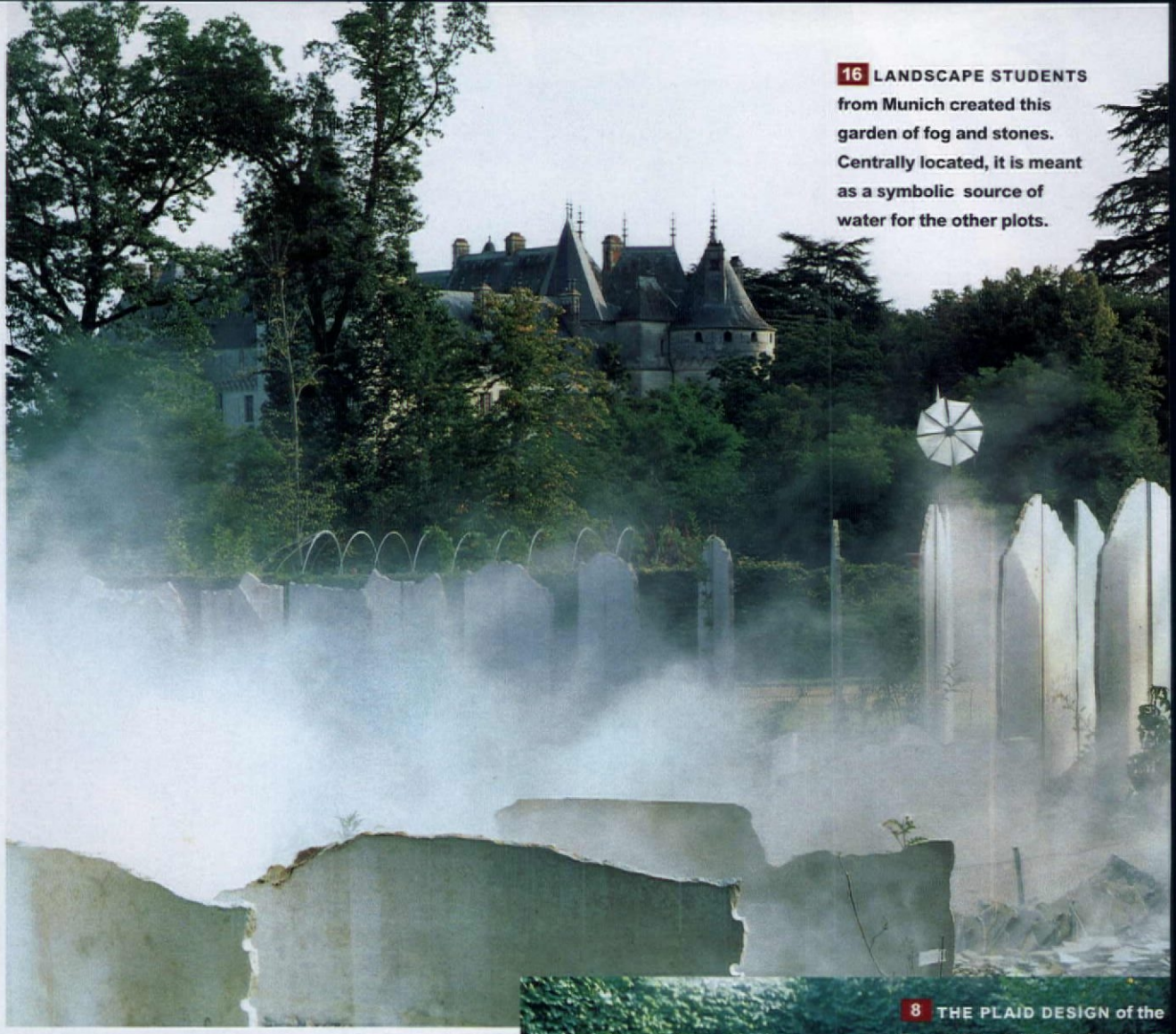



**DESIGNED BY JACQUES WIRTZ on almost nine acres of sweeping hillside above the Loire Valley's Château de Chaumont, the festival's 30 garden plots, divided by winding paths and transitional areas of grasses and flowers, resemble a board game for landscape designers.**

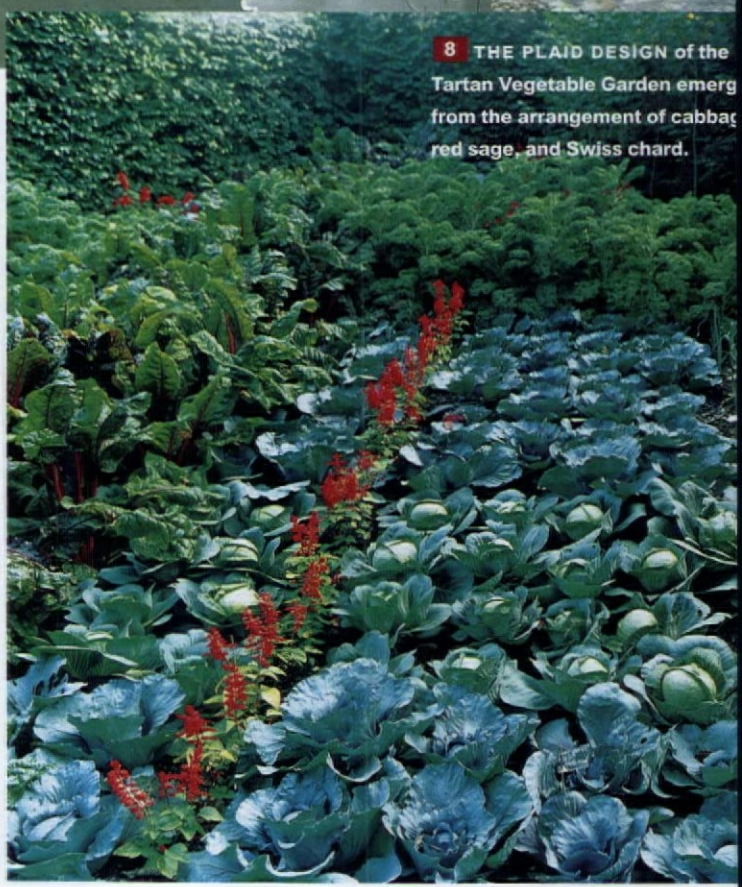



# Site Plan

A bird's-eye view shows landscape architect Jacques Wirtz's playful layout for the 30 festival plots. Each year, designers from around the world are invited to install a garden on the theme of that year's festival. The highly inventive gardens for 1999's "Nothing But Vegetable Gardens": 1. Vegetable Garden in Squares 2. African Vegetable Garden 3. Tepee 4. Trognes 5. Nomadic Vegetable Garden 6. Oh! Flowers 7. From Sky to Earth 8. Tartan Vegetable Garden 9. Dancing Vegetable Garden 10. Persian Wheel 11. Gardens for Bangladesh 12. Trajectory 13. Bio-Vegetable Garden 14. Urban Vegetable Garden 15. Chinese Garden 16. Nebelgarten 17. Métissage 18. Monastery Vegetable Garden 19. Grandfather's Thingummy 20. Three Cabins 21. Soft Greenhouse 22. Archipelago 23. Azulejos 24. Gaspatio Andaluz 25. Viagreen 26. Butterfly Greenhouse 27. Colors of India —D.N.



**16** LANDSCAPE STUDENTS from Munich created this garden of fog and stones. Centrally located, it is meant as a symbolic source of water for the other plots.



**8** THE PLAID DESIGN of the Tartan Vegetable Garden emerg from the arrangement of cabbag red sage, and Swiss chard.



**19** ZINC GUTTERS sprouting an assortment of plants form Grandfather's Thingummy.

visitors to look down on a Lilliputian landscape of lettuces, rivers of oregano, and hillsides forested in parsley.

Perhaps the most beguiling example of the vegetable garden as playground was Grandfather's Thingummy, an ingenious composition of zinc gutters, tires, and other pickings from an imagined pensioner's hoardings. To foil invading snails, a bulwark of bottles, twigs, and slate chips protected precious lettuces, while allowing for the escargots' easy collection as eventual appetizer. Nearby, ripe tomatoes were planted in string bags and placed to drop into a tiny reservoir, ensuring their gentle landing and simultaneous washing.

No vegetable garden would be complete without its complement of flowers, and at Chaumont these were planted along walkways as well as within the gardens themselves. In the Butterfly Greenhouse, designed to encourage reproduction of the increasingly scarce lepidoptera, cabbages and fennel mingled with lantana, impatiens, and eight kinds of butterfly bush. Another potager, with painted gourds and watering cans strung up like lights at a fun fair, featured a quadrant of edible flowers enigmatically equated with Air. Never mind—adjacent fruits symbolized Fire, too, according to the catalog; fantasy *à la française* often springs from just such a bedrock of seriousness. Feeling suddenly, almost subversively, American, I quickly retraced my steps to the Nomadic Vegetable Garden's bed of all-white snapdragons, cosmos, and cleomes, glistening in the afternoon sun like sugar-and-water confections against the distant stone towers of Chaumont's romantic castle.



**20** THE LITTLE CABINS in this garden are a take-off on the lessons of "The Three Little Pigs."



**24** RECYCLED OLIVE-OIL DRUMS planted with basil, tomatoes, peppers, and garlic offer the ingredients of Gaspatio Andaluz.

# an irish cook's paradise

At Ballymaloe House in County Cork, the chefs have one hand in the kitchen and the other in the garden



WRITTEN BY ALISON COOK PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL McDERMIT

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN



FOXGLOVES AND COLUMBINE, opposite page, point the way through a beech hedge to the Ballymaloe Cookery School's herb garden. MYRTLE ALLEN, this page, with her celebrated Irish soda bread, was inspired by an early 1960s article on French country restaurants to serve seasonal, locally based meals at Ballymaloe House, her historic County Cork farmstead, which is now a landmark inn.





THE MODEST RIVER Rooska threads through the green counterpane of meadows that is eastern County Cork, joining two Irish farmsteads as opposite as yin and yang—and as intimately connected. Upstream lies stately Ballymaloe House, the country inn grown famous for the table set by Myrtle Allen, a gentleman-farmer's wife who in 1964 opened her dining room to paying guests, and never looked back. Two miles downriver, where the Rooska meanders toward Ballycotton Bay, the Ballymaloe Cookery School bustles amid an elaborate complex of gardens dreamed up by Myrtle's daughter-in-law Darina and her husband, Tim Allen.

Old-school Ballymaloe House drowses at the heart of naturalistic woodlands, mown-grass rhododendron walks, and an ancient walled kitchen garden disarmingly fronted by a homely metal clothesline. The next-generation Cookery School, by way of contrast, seethes with activity and up-front ambition, its highly structured gardens laid out with spit-and-polish formality. Yet these two different Ballymaloe worlds are united by a single, driving principle, pioneered by Myrtle Allen: the creation of a worldly Irish cuisine based on the very freshest ingredients, either homegrown or locally produced. The Allens' organic gardens, together with a full acre under glass, are the sine qua non of the whole enterprise. Out of them come meals that helped change the way the world looked at Irish food—and the way the Irish viewed their own culinary potential.

Upstream or down, someone is always prowling and picking in these gardens. At Ballymaloe House, Myrtle Allen, a redoubtable, measured woman who is very much the matriarch of her large and complicated clan, still patrols the vegetable patch on occasion, searching for the pickling-sized onions that flourish on bed edges. Rory O'Connell, Darina Allen's brother and a Myrtle protégé, who acts as the inn's chef, roams two wall-sheltered acres of herbs and



**FROM THE CLASSROOMS** at the Ballymaloe Cookery School, opposite page, top, students fan out into the herb and vegetable gardens for the day's wildly variable catch of **SALAD GREENS AND EDIBLE FLOWERS**, shown at left. The bountifulness of the gardens ensures that the school's **FOUNDER, DARINA ALLEN**, right, never has to make the same salad two days running in her recently opened café. (Here she uses a bowl made of Irish elm, by craftsman Keith Mosse.) When she's not working on the TV show, cookbooks, or classes that have made her famous, Allen designs **GARDEN FOLLIES**, such as the one made of seashells, above. The raised perennial beds that line the garden path are a work in progress.







## RECIPE

### SUMMER FRUIT SALAD WITH SWEET GERANIUM LEAVES

**Serves 8 to 10**

Sweet geraniums (*Pelargonium graveolens*, also known as rose geraniums) are ever present at Ballymaloe, where the lemony leaves are used to enliven simple dishes.

**1 cup raspberries**
**1 cup loganberries**
**1 cup red currants**
**1 cup black currants**
**1 cup small strawberries**
**1 cup blueberries**
**1 cup wild strawberries**

SYRUP

**2 cups sugar**
**2 cups water**
**6 to 8 large, sweet geranium leaves**

▶ Place berries in a china bowl and let them reach room temperature. ▶ Put the sugar, water, and sweet geranium leaves in a saucepan and bring slowly to a boil, stirring until the sugar dissolves. ▶ Boil two minutes, then pour over the fruit. ▶ Macerate several hours; remove geranium leaves. ▶ Serve chilled, with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream. ▶ Garnish with fresh geranium leaves. —*Adapted from* Ballymaloe Seasons, *by Darina Allen (Roberts Rinehart, $29.95).*

vegetables a couple of hours before dinner; the pea tendrils and new broad-bean leaves he ferrets out will join globe artichokes in a sharply earthy salad that is to be had for only a few fleeting days each year. He kidnaps infant lettuces and dewy mint for one of the puréed soups that are a Ballymaloe trademark. The garden mistress of the house, Hazel Allen, another daughter-in-law, keeps a sharp eye on the gooseberry bushes, nabbing the tart fruits while their skins are still thin; simmered into a breakfast compote deepened by elder blossoms, they snap your eyelids to attention.

A couple of miles off, a live-in cookery school student on a salad bowl–filling hunt ducks through a tunnel of sculpted beech into a box-edged herb garden patterned after Villandry, an ornate puzzle of color and form. In the separate vegetable garden, approached by a moody, wooded path, diamond-shaped brick walks enclose rows so orderly and picturesque—waves of delicate green onions, a white froth of flowering sea kale—that Darina Allen is sometimes loath to take so much as a leaf. (The cook wins out over the gardener every time.) From the newer fruit garden, its

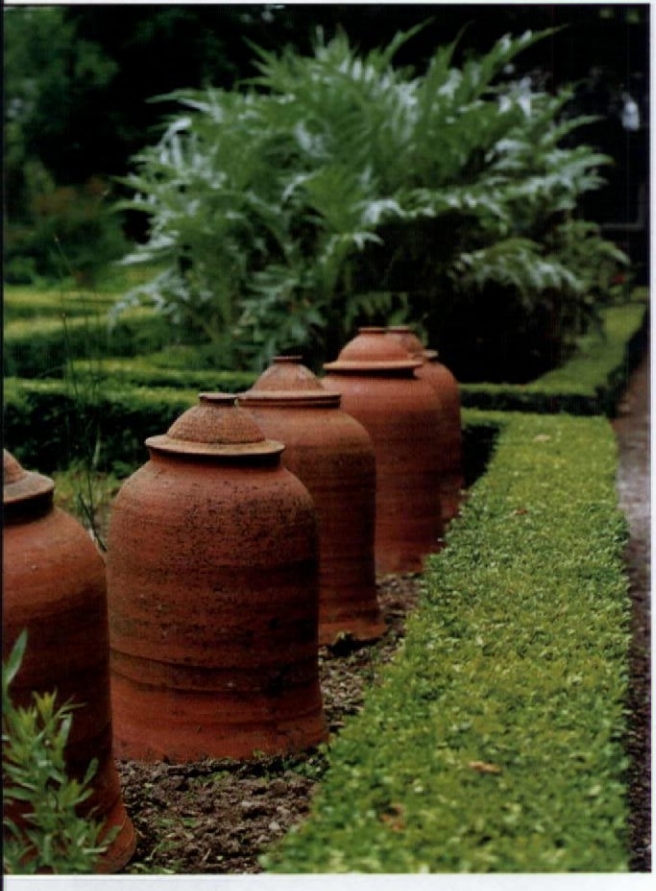


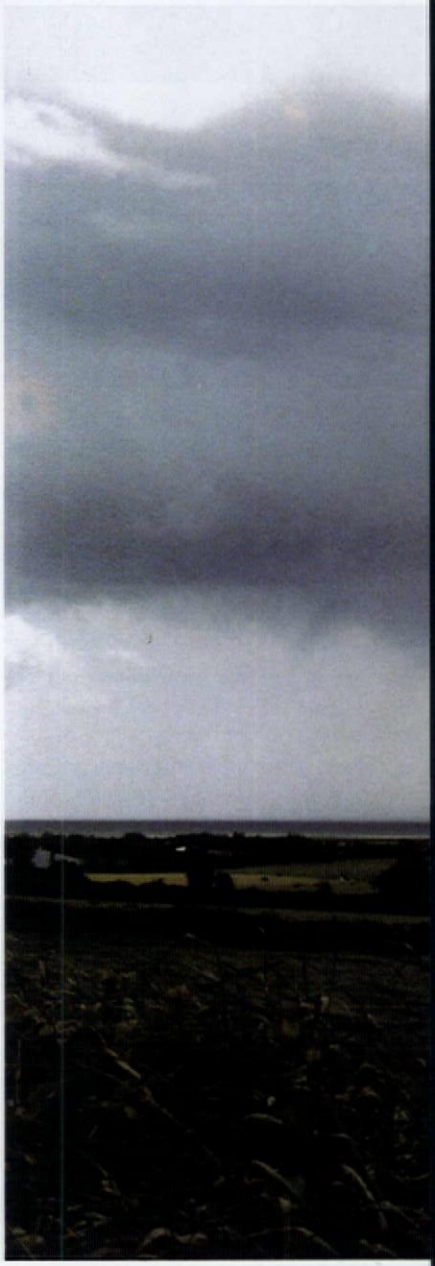
**THE COOKERY SCHOOL herb garden, opposite page, was inspired by a visit to the formal gardens at the château of Villandry. The parterre-style beds are edged in boxwood; the bold verticals include massive sheaves of globe artichoke and angelica with blooms bigger than softballs. SOFT SUMMER FRUITS from the school's still-evolving fruit garden go into a salad, above. THE SCHOOL'S MENAGERIE includes a mutt named Buddy, right, making himself at home among the flowering chives.**



espaliered archways still taking shape, come crimson stalks of rhubarb hiding under parasol-sized leaves.

In the school's lively café, that rhubarb becomes an exhilarating tart graced by soft brown sugar and thick Irish pouring cream. It is a tribute to the lavishly green pastures that feed the dairy cows. "What Ireland grows best is grass," observes Tim Allen, an open-faced man whose nose is liable to be dusted in flour. While Darina zips dervishlike through her projects—a TV cookery series, cookbooks, an ice cream line—her husband, a horticulturist by training, is obsessed by the slow-paced art of bread making. Handsome, rough loaves have been a Ballymaloe staple for more than





**COOKERY SCHOOL PIGLETS, above, farrowed and raised in the surrounding meadow, have a happy (if short) life eating first-class scraps, before ending up in Darina Allen's recipes. TERRA-COTTA forcing pots, left, from the Whichford Pottery, are used to blanch winter sea kale, growing shoots that taste as delicate as asparagus. The weather can switch gears three times in an hour on Ireland's damp SOUTHERN COAST, seen at right from the Ballymaloe Cookery School, a mere mile from the rich fish and shellfish troves of Ballycotton Bay. But warm currents from the Gulf Stream make gardening a surprisingly temperate affair. Sources, see back of book.**

three decades, and Tim is still refining the fast-but-tricky Irish soda bread (see recipe, page 178) and a stone-ground, whole-meal brown yeast bread that invites you to eat way too much Irish butter. Wherever the Allens travel, says Tim, "the brown bread is the thing that brings us home."

Home ground, in the end, is what both Ballymaloes are all about. Nowhere else on the planet is there precisely this conjunction of soil, climate, produce, people, pasturage, and products—from lobsters straight out of the sea to free-range eggs with yolks so orange they are almost shocking. Dish by dish, Ballymaloe's cuisine may translate only roughly to other kitchens—but the idea behind it translates perfectly.

## boxed & blanched




**After a 1987 visit to the famed potager of the Loire Valley Château Villandry, Darina Allen sketched out the box-wood parterres for the Ballymaloe Cookery School herb garden on a napkin. 1. The low-growing box edging, *Buxus sempervirens,* is clipped in early June and again at the end of fall. 2. The box squares restrict the wanderings of invasive plants like comfrey, mint, and horseradish, each of which has its own bed. 3. Less aggressive species are placed ornamentally around a central plant with "architectural" value, like globe artichoke or angelica. 4. The school's head gardener, Susan Turner, opens the culinary season at Easter by picking blanched sea kale shoots (*Crambe maritima*). Blanching produces crisper, more tender, and less bitter vegetables, but fewer all around. Ballymaloe gardeners use Victorian-style forcing pots for blanching, but anything that blocks light—even an overturned pot with a covered hole—will do. 5. A wrapping of their own leaves shields cauliflower and endive from light. 6. Celery and leeks are planted in holes, to keep them in the dark. —D.N.**



## Recipes from "An Irish Cook"

*(Cont. from page 177)*

### WHITE SODA BREAD

Makes one large loaf

| | |
|---|---|
| **3 1/4 cups** | **unbleached all-purpose flour** |
| **1/2 tsp.** | **salt** |
| **1/2 tsp.** | **baking soda** |
| **1 1/2–1 3/4 cups** | **buttermilk** |

▶Preheat oven to 450 degrees. ▶Sift the dry ingredients into a bowl and make a well in the center. ▶Pour in most of the buttermilk at once and, using one hand, mix in the flour from the sides of the bowl, adding more milk if necessary, until the dough is softish, not too wet and sticky. ▶When the dough comes together, turn out onto a well-floured work surface. ▶Wash and dry your hands. ▶Knead the dough lightly, just enough to tidy it up, and flip it over. ▶Pat the dough into a round, about 1 1/2 inches deep, and cut a cross on the top to let the fairies out. Let the cuts go over the sides of the bread. ▶Bake at 450 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes, then reduce heat to 400 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes, or until done. ▶If you are in doubt, tap the bottom of the bread: when done, it will sound hollow.

—Adapted from *Ballymaloe Seasons*, by Darina Allen (Roberts Rinehart, $29.95)

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Condé Nast HOUSE & GARDEN (ISSN-1087-9528) is published monthly by The Condé Nast Publications Inc., 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036. Steven T. Florio, President & Chief Executive Officer; David B. Chemidlin, Treasurer; Jill Henderson Bright, Secretary. Periodical postage paid at New York, New York 10001 and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as Second-Class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 0978027. Canadian Goods and Services Tax Registration No. R123242885. Subscription: In the U.S. and possessions, $19.97 for one year. In Canada, $33.97 for one year including GST and HST where applicable. Elsewhere, $38.97 for one year, payable in advance. Single copies: U.S. $3.50; Canada $4.50. For back issue inquiries, call 1-800-753-7276 or write to HOUSE & GARDEN, P. O. Box 57780, Boulder, CO 80322-7780. For subscriptions, address changes, and adjustments, write to Condé Nast HOUSE & GARDEN, P.O. Box 56145, Boulder, CO 80322-6145. Eight weeks are required for change of address. Please give both new and old address, as printed on last label. SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES: Please write to Condé Nast HOUSE & GARDEN, P.O. Box 56145, Boulder, Colorado 80322-6145, or call 1-800-234-1520. First copy of new subscription will be mailed within eight weeks after receipt of order. Occasionally, we make our subscriber list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services we believe would interest our readers. If you do not want to receive these offers and/or information, please advise us at P.O. Box 56145, Boulder, CO. 80322. Volume 169 Number 3
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES
**POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO CONDÉ NAST HOUSE & GARDEN, P.O. BOX 56145, BOULDER, COLORADO 80328-6145.**

# SOURCES

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**DOMESTIC BLISS Pages 27-50**

**Page 27**, American Leather, Dallas, TX. 800-456-9599. Repetoire, Boston, MA. 617-426-3865. **Page 28**, Coach. 800-262-2411. York Street Studio. 800-YORK-811. Dossier, NYC. 212-924-4720. Hermès. 800-441-4488. Room. 800-420-ROOM. **Page 30, Royal Palm leather throw blanket**, 54 x 72, $5,375, **bed blanket**, 90 x 90, $7,750, the Ralph Lauren Home Collection, NYC. 212-642-8700. Banana Republic. 888-BR-STYLE. Roots, NYC. 212-324-3333. **Page 34**, Brown Jordan. 800-743-4252. **Page 42**, Anichini. 800-553-5309. Naturemorte, NYC. 212-226-8346. Sové, NYC. 212-969-8993. **Jardinière and floral silks**, Embroidery Palace. 310-273-8003. Available through architects and designers. Cowtan & Tout, NYC. 212-753-4488. Available through architects and designers. Allegra Hicks Design, London. 011-44-171-720-3669. **Mule**, $163, and **purse**, $70, Chelsea Textiles, NYC. 212-319-5804. **Page 44**, Marmol and Radziner. 310-264-1814. Kerry Joyce Studio. 323-938-4442.



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**Page 54**, Great Impressions, Oakland, CA. 510-526-6019. Hinson & Co., NYC. 212-688-7754. Available through architects and designers. **Page 58**, the Source Perrier Collection. 888-543-2804.

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**Landscape architect**, Wirtz International, Belgium. 011-32-3-680-1322.

**THE PRINCE'S TRUST Pages 122-127**

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**JUICY FRUIT Pages 128-129**

Matthew Marks Gallery, NYC. 212-243-0200.

**PRESSED FOR TIME Pages 130-135**

**McEvoy olive oil**, Dean & Deluca. 800-221-7714. **Sourdough starters**, *The Baker's Catalog*. 800-827-6836.

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The Conard-Pyle Rose Company. www.starroses.com. Arena Rose Company, Paso Robles, CA. 805-227-4094.

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Château de Villandry, France. 011-33-47-50-02-09.

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The Bryan's Ground Garden, Herefordshire, England. 011-44-154-426-0001.

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**Interior designer**, Florence de Dampierre. 203-266-5074. D&F Workroom, NYC. 212-352-0160. **Flowers** by David Tutera. 914-777-3817. All fabrics are available through architects and designers. **Pages 158-159**, Elizabeth Street Co., NYC. 212-644-6969. Osborne & Little, NYC. 212-751-3333. Scalamandré. 800-932-4361. Pranich & Associates, NYC. 212-980-6173. Counterpoint, El Paso, TX. 888-545-5073. Totem, NYC. 888-519-5587. **Pages 160-161, Oh chair**, $3,065, Moss, NYC. 212-226-2190. Cassina. 800-770-3568. Kirk Brummel, NYC. 212-477-8590. Clarence House. 800-632-0076. Summer Hill Ltd., NYC. 212-935-6376. Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878. **Scalloped pillowcases**, $300 each, Léron. 800-9LINEN9. **Birdcage**, $5,500, Newel Art Galleries, Inc., NYC. 212-758-1970. **Pages 162-163**, Kravet. 888-4-KRAVET. **Pumpkin charger**, Vietri, Inc. 800-277-5933. **Dinner plates**, $58 each, Bernardaud Boutique, NYC. 800-884-7775. **Jardin de Villandry plates**, $265 for a set of four, Devine Corporation, NJ. 732-751-0500. **Grand Lieu hock glasses**, $130, **cordial glasses**, $75, and **Bubbles hock glasses**, $120, Cristal Saint-Louis. 800-238-5522. **Vega Flutissimo flute**, in Emerald, $150, Baccarat, NYC. 800-777-0100. **Hervé Van der Straeten three-tiered cake server**, $1,100, and **Frivole porcelain tea set**, designed by Hervé Van der Straeten, with **hot beverage server**, $375, **creamer**, $120, **sugar bowl**, $195, **teacups**, $41, and **saucers**, $22, Bernardaud Boutique. **Plates on wall**, $40, Marie-Christine Gounod, NYC. 212-794-4086. **Fiddlehead five-piece flatware set**, $30, Pottery Barn. 800-922-5507. **Root pedestal table**, $15,000, **console table**, $120,000 a pair, **armchair**, $14,500, and **plant stand**, $9,500, Newel Art Galleries, Inc. **Napkins**, Kirk Brummel.

**GALLIC STEW Pages 164-169**

Chaumont-sur-Loire. 011-33-2-54-20-99-22.

**AN IRISH COOK'S PARADISE Pages 170-177**

The Ballymaloe Cookery School. 011-353-21-646-785. **Blanching pots**, Whichford Pottery. 011-44-171-160-868-4416.

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**CORRECTIONS**

In the January issue, **page 77**, the **Portico lounge chairs** are from the McGuire Furniture Company, 800-662-4847; and the **project architect** for the home featured in "Light Catcher," **pages 108-115**, is Suki Dixon.

The preceding is a list of some of the products, manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and approximate list prices in this issue of *House & Garden*. While extreme care is taken to provide correct information, *House & Garden* cannot guarantee information received from sources. All information should be verified before ordering any item. Antiques, one-of-a-kind pieces, discontinued items, and personal collections may not be priced, and some prices have been excluded at the request of the homeowners.

—PRODUCED BY MARGARET A. BUCKLEY

## Pressed for Time

*(Cont. from page 134)* there—she didn't set out to be an olive farmer. She just wanted a place to hang out with her grandchildren. But when the county wouldn't let her rehab some old ranch structures without proof of an agricultural purpose, she came up with her olive scheme—thanks to a cooking class she had taken from Marcella Hazan ("who was fierce about olive oil," recalls McEvoy).

Seven years on, with help from Tuscan olive guru Maurizio Castelli, the hills that rise in a steep bowl from the ranch compound are quilted with 11,000 silvery, slender-leaved olive trees in six Italian varieties. Harvested at an early, just-reddening stage for maximum character, olives milled at McEvoy's gleaming new *frantóio* (or pressing facility) translate into full, racy oil—coursing with green notes and a leaping, peppery bite.

That oil shines right through the ranch kitchen in elemental sautés and breathtaking salads, swizzled onto anything from the spouted bottles that pass from diner to diner as offhandedly as a salt shaker. With garden produce of such clarity and immediacy, a bit of olive oil and a well-chosen herb can be all you need. "A lot of the stuff Margaret gives me is a no-brainer to cook," testifies chef Mark Rohrmeier. Even a pared-down pizza becomes a thing of beauty. Cartwheeled with heirloom tomatoes and splashed with olive oil, fresh mozzarella, and basil, the thin crust slides into the kitchen garden's sinuous outdoor wood oven and proceeds to transform itself. At a firebox temperature of 746 degrees Fahrenheit, it puffs and vulcanizes so rapidly, it seems to be alive.

Ranch-oak smoke chuffs from the oven's swooping chimney, a natural garden magnet. Lunch guests drift out to gape and anticipate. A ranch hand passing from the greenhouses, broom in hand, stops to slap a mammoth pumpkin, grins, moves on. In this garden and at the table, everything about this unlikely enterprise connects. And when a crackly, olive-oiled roast chicken is carved up, releasing the sharp green scent of bay laurel leaves—harvested from the native trees huddled in copses high on the grassy slopes—it smells like a celebration of place, and of common purpose.

## Recipes from "Pressed for Time"

*(Cont. from page 135)*

### HEIRLOOM TOMATO PIZZA

Makes two 10-by-15-inch pizzas

#### PIZZA DOUGH

**2 1/4 tsp. active dry yeast**
**1/2 cup warm water**
**1/2 cup rye or wheat flour**
**1/2 cup sourdough starter**
**1/2 cup lukewarm water**
**1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil**
**1 tsp. kosher or sea salt**
**3 1/2 cups unbleached flour**

▶Dissolve the yeast in the warm water. ▶Stir in the rye or wheat flour. ▶Cover, and leave in a warm place for 20 to 30 minutes. ▶Add the sourdough starter, 1/2 cup of lukewarm water, olive oil, and salt to the yeast mixture. Mix with a wooden spoon. ▶Stir in 3 cups of the unbleached flour, adding more until dough is firm, yet moist. ▶Turn onto a lightly floured surface, and knead for 10 minutes. ▶Put dough in a bowl rubbed with olive oil, and turn to coat. Cover with plastic wrap, and leave in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour. ▶Punch the dough down, and let rest for 30 minutes. ▶Divide the dough in half. Roll into smooth balls and place each onto a lightly oiled surface, turning to coat completely. Cover with plastic wrap, and let rest for 15 minutes, or refrigerate for up to 4 hours.

#### PIZZA TOPPING

**2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil**
**1 cup freshly grated mozzarella**
**4–6 medium heirloom tomatoes, sliced 1/8-inch thick**
**1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan**
**2 Tbsp. thinly sliced fresh basil**
**Cornmeal for dusting**
**Salt and freshly ground pepper**

▶Preheat oven to 450 degrees. If using a pizza stone, put in the oven now. ▶Stretch one ball of dough to size, and place on a pizza peel or baking sheet dusted with cornmeal. ▶Brush dough with 1 Tbsp. of the olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. ▶Top with 1/2 cup of the mozzarella and half of the tomato slices. ▶Sprinkle on 1/8 cup of the Parmesan, and add a little more salt and pepper. Slide the pizza onto a baking stone, or place onto a baking tray. ▶Bake until the sides of the pizza are a light golden brown, about 20 minutes. ▶Top with 1 Tbsp. of the basil and serve. ▶Repeat with the second ball of dough.



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# polite society

## by william norwich

THE CHATTER was scratchier than net crinolines this fall when one of the international glossies published a less than flattering article about a certain socially ambitious Mrs. Gottrocks. Despite the woman's patronage of couture fashion and provenance-perfect paintings and porcelains, and regardless of her considerable efforts as an indefatigable fund-raiser, the article revealed that none of her new, right stuff had been able to land Our Lady of Lace on the top rung of Manhattan's endless social ladder.

Nobody quoted in the article could say exactly where the lady went wrong. All they could surmise was that the woman was "too correct." Not a lot of laughs, in other words.

Too formal? Too correct? Isn't that the point of etiquette and manners, to get it right? Not really. Etiquette without mindfulness is deadly. If you can't relax and adapt, you become a caricature of propriety, and people stiffen around you.

"I believe that knowledge of the rules of living in our society makes us more comfortable, [although] some of the rudest and most objectionable people I have ever known have been technically the most 'correct,' " wrote **Amy Vanderbilt** in the introduction to *The Amy Vanderbilt Complete Book of Etiquette,* first published in 1952. "Some of the warmest, most lovable, have had little more than an innate feeling of what is right toward others."

"We should all know **formality**, enjoy it, then forget it"—Joan Rivers

You might be surprised to learn that **Joan Rivers**, famous for delivering jokes in sometimes questionable taste, is one of the most popular hostesses in Manhattan. From first ladies to British royalty, everyone goes when asked to one of Rivers's formal dinners at her penthouse apartment on the Upper East Side. What is the secret of her social success? "I know etiquette," Rivers explains. "Etiquette means being thoughtful. Never say to a friend, 'I hope you're going to sue that cosmetic surgeon.' Joking aside, I love formality. Formality means structure. Structure means traditions. We should all know formality, enjoy it, then forget it. I love to laugh. So I structure my dinners formally—guests are seated, and usually dressed in black tie—and then I let it go. I make sure the toasts are funny. I try to do something funny at the very start, just to break the ice."

As in decorating, sometimes it's more interesting and amusing to exaggerate something that is out of sync instead of trying to tame it. For instance, for the lavish *Doctor Zhivago*–inspired wedding of her daughter, **Melissa**, last year, Rivers hired both an orchestra and the New York City Gay Men's Chorus. The orchestra and the choir broke into "Hey, Big Spender" as Joan came down the aisle in a dress trimmed with sable.

Then there was the dinner she gave for **Viscount David Linley**, son of **Princess Margaret**, and his wife, **Serena**. "Everyone was coming in their best jewels and clothing, all uptight about how to address a viscount," Rivers recalls, "and my elevator broke. So I hired four muscle boys from Gold's Gym to carry the guests upstairs—literally, to throw them over their shoulders." A pause. "Finally," she says, and laughs.



**Everything but.**



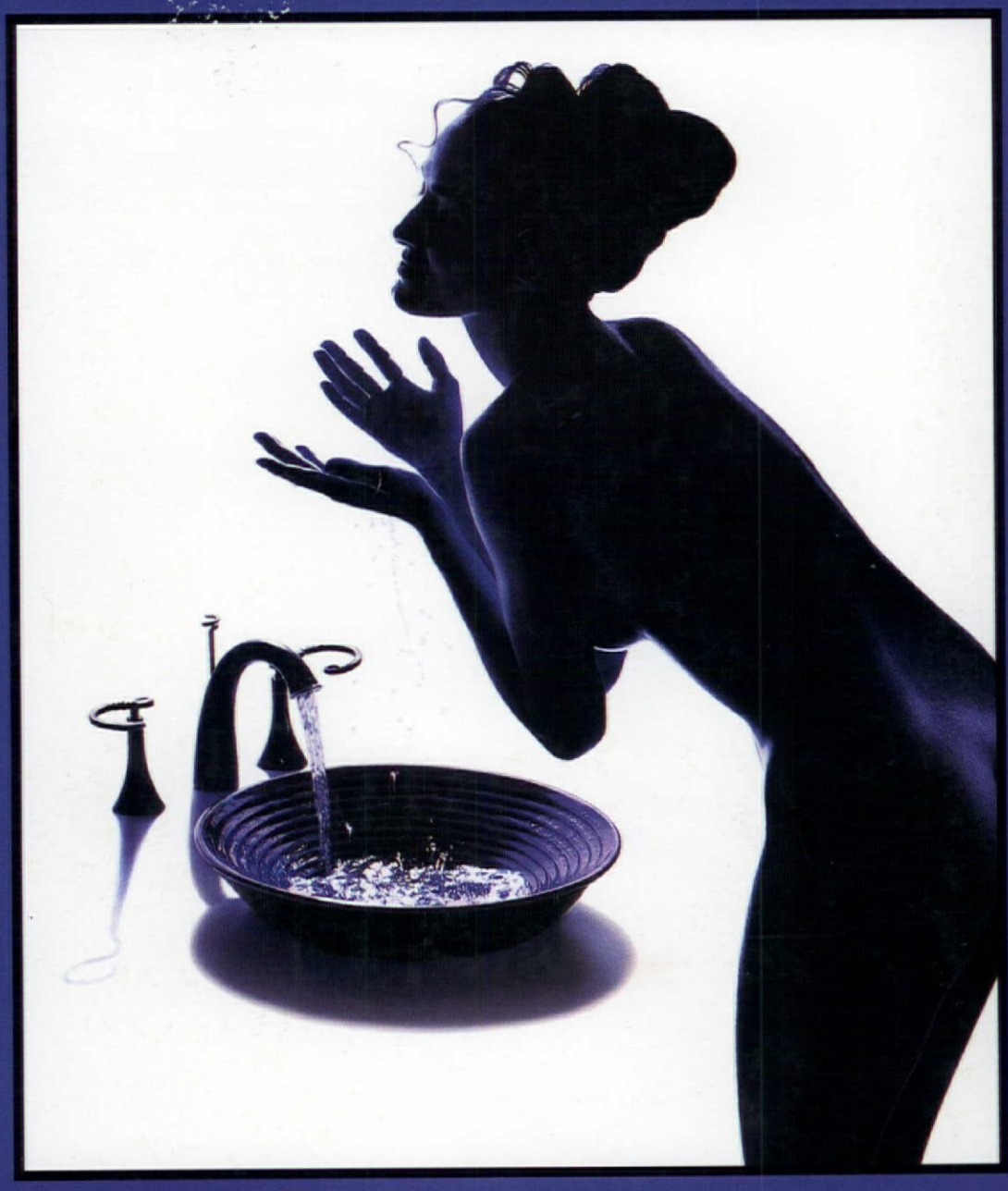
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